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EUNO.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Dainty little princess,
Pure as crystal snow;
Witching little fairy,
Beautiful Euno!

Birdie, whisper to her
That I love her well;
Sing my love unto her,
Ocean's blushing shell.

Zephyrs, waft caresses
To that brow of snow;
Bear a thousand blessings
To my sweet Euno.

Would I dared to whisper
In that rosy ear
Love's loud words of wooing,
Winsome little dear!

Fairykin, my darling!
Loveling, my sweet!
Let me live to win thee,
Or perish at thy feet! BEULAH.

RAVENSWOOD;

OR,

The Raftsmen Of The Delaware.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER X.

DOWN THE DELAWARE.—THE RAFT-FIRES.

Swiftly down the swollen river glided the long flotilla of rafts, on one of which our friends were borne. Navigating the Delaware near its head-waters is very much like "dancing the chest." The rafts are always making straight up to a mountain or promontory, with no apparent possibility of escaping contact with them, until the last moment, and then a way opens, only to be closed, however, the very instant it is entered. But the winding water leads them on, eluding the mountain-bars and gliding like a spirit by shaded shore and wooded isle.

Meantime, if the day be clear, the sun seems now at one point and now at another in the heavens, the shadows falling in every possible direction, North, South, East and West, changing places with a rapidity that is bewildering. The blindness of the river's course is occasionally increased by small islands on its bosom, whose elms and closeset willows, particularly if it is in the period of their foliage, lean from isle to shore, and from shore to isle, forming shaded alleys as intricate apparently, if not really as the labyrinth of Mount Ida.

But through all these mazes the skilful raftsmen make their way, glorying in the excitement of the passage.

The afternoon sun had disappeared from the view of our voyagers.

Philip and Flossa had been long conversing, and Starway now joined them. Flossa had been informed of the discovery of the note upon the person of Irvin Gaines, and of its undoubted reference to herself.

"Can you remember anything of your early childhood, Flossa?" her lover had asked eagerly.

She sighed and passed her fair hand over her brow.

"Nothing that is distinct; only I am sure that I once lived amid surroundings very different from those in which you found me. It is like a dream. It seemed all sunlight and flowers: then sudden darkness came—something dreadful must have happened. I cannot remember. Sometimes I have thought that I always lived in the forest with that cruel man, and that I have only dreamed and fancied, as children will."

"No, no; that cannot be."

"I think so myself, for, as I have said, I am *sure* that I dwelt among brighter scenes. Only, everything seems so unreal at times."

"I do not wonder," spoke Starway, feelingly. "But the light will shine out at last, and show us the truth."

"And even if it does not, Flossa," whispered Philip, tenderly, "I will love and cherish you the same."

The presence of Starway was no bar to the happy intercourse of the lovers. His gaze rested upon them like a benediction. He appeared unusually pensive and thoughtful even to Flossa, who was well acquainted with his moods.

"In your prosperity, Flossa," he said at last, addressing her, "you will not forget your forest friend, will you? In your prosperity, I say, for I already look upon your future happiness as secure—the love of this young man will bring you all that you could ask, apart from Heaven. You will not then forget the lonely man who tried to be a father to you?"

"Never, never!" she answered, with deep emotion. She saw that he did not doubt her, but only gave expression to a feeling of loneliness that was working in his heart.

"Our home shall be your home," said Philip, earnestly.

"No, no," he returned gratefully, but sadly. "There is no roof, no rest for me. I would not dwell upon the quiet shore. Listen," he continued, as he saw their attention was strongly fixed upon him. "I will tell you my story; you may be interested to hear it. It is brief and sad enough. Once I had a loved wife and darling child—the latter just as I imagine you were, Flossa, when you were a bud—before you became a flower." He smiled gently upon her, as he said in parenthesis, "You know you belong to the floral kingdom, and not to the human sisterhood. I had a beautiful home, and was happy—too happy for a mortal to be, as I sometimes with a secret trembling used to think. Is it not one of the English poets—Young, I believe—who warns us to tremble at a joy? I do not agree with him entirely—'tis a very unwise philosophy—but when mortals reach a bliss that cannot be much less than that of the immortals, *then* let fear come upon them, for their joy cannot last. I loved, I *worshipped* my young wife.

THE ESCAPE OF IRVIN GAINES.

I rendered her an homage that should have been offered only to Heaven itself. *I lost her:* not by death—that were to be endured. But in a night she left my roof, taking with her our child, and leaving not one word of explanation, save to say that we must never meet again. I have not seen her—have not heard one word of tidings of her from that hour to this. My wife—my idolized wife and my darling child are lost to me forever! Forever!" he repeated, with a thrilling woe in the words; "for if anything could divide our hearts on earth, nothing can join them in Heaven."

He paused. There was a despairing bitterness in the close, as if slow doubt had at last made its way into his heart, and he had come to believe that only falseness on the part of his wife could be accepted as the explanation of the mystery of her desertion of him.

His listeners did not attempt to offer any word of consolation. They were pityingly silent. There was the faintest intimation of misanthropy in his tone, though they felt that his great heart was still full of love, and his strong soul full of faith, even while the demon of doubt endeavored to seduce him. A nature less noble than his, loving and suffering as he had done, would long before have become soured and cynical.

The shadows of early evening were descending on river and shore. Starway slowly withdrew from the presence of his hearers, taking with him, as he felt, their sympathy, and knowing that their silence was only a deeper expression of their interest.

"A sad story," whispered Philip in tones that indicated the aroused condition of his feelings.

"Sad indeed," murmured Flossa. "How can he be comforted, Philip?"

"Only by our silent sympathy. He is evidently a constant sufferer, notwithstanding the quiet cheerfulness of his manner and his well-maintained interest in his surroundings. But a nature like his cannot forget. I trust that it will not eventually become changed from its original warmth and sweetness by his long trial."

"Oh, that the clouds might be lifted from his life; he was never meant for a recluse, Philip, I think. Does not the world lose much when such as he are drawn from it?"

"Very much; if——"

He paused suddenly. Starway was again approaching them.

"Do not dwell upon the melancholy story I have told you," he said gently. "I should not have dimmed your young joy, perhaps, with the recital. But it was a relief to me to have you hear it. I had never spoken so to any one before. You are my children, and should know the secret of my sadness. Are you aware, Flossa," he continued, addressing her with increased feeling, "that I sometimes think that you are indeed my child? Yet it cannot be—it is only a wild, sweet fancy."

"You have been more than a father to me," she murmured gratefully.

"And you more than a daughter to me. Without you to love and to instruct, I fear I should have found existence unendurable. You have saved me, Flossa. There was no rest on shore or water for me until I saw you—so like what added years must have made my lost darling."

He turned from them again, and went slowly to the rear of the raft.

"I owe him so much," said Flossa. "Oh, Philip, can it be, as you say, that I am not ignorant and rude like other girls of this wild region?"

"You are *very* ignorant not to know that you are not," he answered with a smile.

"It is as one who is to be your wife, Philip," she said softly, "that I think of these things."

"Without Starway's aid—for which, however, I am deeply grateful—I think you would have grown up just as winning-sweet. We cannot add a freshness to the dew, Flossa, nor a fragrance to the rose. Do you know what I mean by that?"

"Flatterer, flatterer!" she answered softly.

"Not so," he breathed in return.

Their attention was now directed from themselves to the crew of the raft. The huge craft was being steered in toward a broad cove on the western side of the river, and preparations were being made to lay to for the night. A number of the other rafts were following the example, and soon the little harbor was filled. By the time they were all secured, night had fairly descended.

The majority of the raftsmen, after staking their rafts, dispersed to gather fuel wherewith to prepare their evening meal, and it was not long before the river bank was starred with a line of blazing fires.

The spectacle presented was charmingly picturesque. Flossa and Philip had not yet gone ashore, and the view obtained by them of the sight was an advantageous one. They contemplated it with pleasure for awhile.

The night was still and starlit, and the river near the bank was all aglow with the reflections of the numerous fires. The cheers of other landing parties above and below the point of debarkation selected by the friends, came ringing through the motionless atmosphere. The softened songs of others were borne to the lovers along the smooth water with the effect of far better music than it really was.

"We are ready to receive you, Philip," shouted Frank Leighton, who had been one of the first to land, and the most active afterward.

Philip conducted Flossa to the shore.

"And supper's ready," was the next announcement from Frank, in a tone that indicated pleasure at the fact.

"I might have assisted in getting it," said the fair girl demurely, as with considerable curiosity she approached the circle of the camp-fire.

"It's meself that's cook," cried Pat McNally, "though I'm afeered, me darlint, that I can't suit yees dilecate taste at all, at all."

"I am not used to delicacies, Pat," she answered, smilingly.

"I know ye ain't, but ye ought to be; the ida-a of one like yersilf a-livin' on potaties. I likes 'em mesilf, and wid nothing else they're variety enough for me: potaties fur breakfast—fried; potaties fur dinner—bilet; potaties fur supper—baked; that's what I call high livin'—wid jist a dhrop of whisky fur flavor."

"I thought you said with nothing else?" smiled Flossa.

"The manein' of me wurds was that I've a ghreater respict fur potaties than anything else that growa. Exciptin' pretty gir-rls," he muttered *sotto voce*. "But while I'm spakin' ye're all a-starvin' I know. Flossie, will ye have the grace to hilp yersilf, and the saints give ye appreciation of the feast!"

With much merriment and real enjoyment the frugal meal—which, was not, however, limited to the single article mentioned—was despatched. Provisions had been brought on the rafts, and our friends fared well considering the circumstances.

After the primitive supper was over, music from the violin of the accomplished Pat followed. Flossa then retired to the comfortable apartment prepared for her on the raft, but the majority of the lumbermen instead of seeking sleep, lingered by the raft-fires to listen to each other's chat, relate stories of wild adventure, and discuss their market prospects. As may be supposed, those who had, to use their own poetical expression, "followed the Delaware" for many years, were possessed of a rich fund of anecdote and story, both tragic and comic, the experience of themselves and others engaged in the vocation.

"I say, fellers," began a battered old rafteman, who looked as if he had been soaked and dried, frozen and thawed, hacked and healed until he had no more physical sensibility than a boulder, "I say, you have heard some good stories, but I once run a better hickory than any of ye that's spoken to-night."

"Tell us about it, Uncle Ab!" cried several voices.

"Uncle Ab," proceeded with his narrative. "It has been twenty year ago," he said, "and I was that much younger than I am now—rayther more, if anything—and I was a-lumberin' on the Susquehanna. We were runnin' considerable grain down the river then, for prices was high, and we made our arks carry the tallest kind o' cargoes. Him who got to market first got the highest price for his wheat, with the readiest sale, for the article was powerful scarce—nigh about as scarce as bears is now on these hills.

"Well, I had a good load of grain aboard my ark, was well on my way down, and was countin' strong on big profits. As we lay one night in an eddy, along with some other chaps—one of 'em like myself, runnin' wheat to market, and anxious to get there first—what does the cunnin' rascal do but cut us adrift. We moved off slow with the easy current, and not one of us waked up till we was aroused by our ark strikin' aginst a sedgy island, miles below our moorin's.

"There we was, landed high and dry, with the freshet fallin' fast. Boys there was some swearin' then—it couldn't be stopped. If Noah, with *his* ark, had been a runnin' with a like object, I think he would have stormed a little, though in them days it's likely there wasn't the same competition in trade.

"Soon after daylight our sneakin' rivals drifted past, shoutin' good-bye to us, and actin' mighty sassy, as if they hadn't been mean enough already. We told 'em they might go where there was more fire and less water.

"But though they were ahead of us, we didn't give up yet. Not at all. We pitched in and *dug a canal* for our ark—we was so mad that workin' was easy as grease—launched her on the slime, and was soon once more on our way. The others was a day ahead of us, but, riskin' the night runnin', we passed 'em in the darkness, and when Colby—that was his name—reached market, our cargo was sold, the money received, and we was ready to return home. Hemlocks and cedars? wasn't that scamp astonished to find us in ahead of him?

"We didn't do nothin' to him—only told the facts; but the way that fellow had the laugh raised on him was a caution.

"Didn't I do pretty well, boys?"

The old man's hearers all agreed that his feat was a daring and unrivalled one; and well satisfied with their admiration, he left the circle and fixed himself for slumber. The rest soon retired; the flickering camp-fires burned low; and soon all was silent, save the swirl of the river-waves.

CHAPTER IX.

A BOLD STROKE.

Next morning the raftsmen were again early astir. A breakfast as humble but as relishable as the meal of the preceding evening, was eaten—and before sunrise the rafts were slipped from their moorings.

All went well. The experience of the voyagers was much the same as that of the previous day—but they did not feel their passage becoming in the least degree monotonous. The river scenery was wild and beautiful; and apart from the entertainment Nature provided them, they possessed resources of amusement in themselves. A pleasant little circle they formed, of which Starway was the central figure, delighting the others with his wit, learning and graphic narratives of adventure on shore and water.

He was evidently a man of unusual attainments, who had known much of the world and society.

That one like him should forsake his former associations for the wilderness, was no evidence of a weakness of soul—it only attested the might of the grief that had driven him into solitude.

He was not a snarling hermit, nor a misanthropic recluse; but one who found in the companionship of Nature such consolation as was best suited to a temperament like his.

The afternoon was waning, and it would soon be time to moor the rafts for the night. A dangerous portion of the river, known as The Breakers, was yet to be passed. This point was dreaded by the raftsmen as offering the greatest obstruction in the Delaware's whole length, for jagged rocks instead of the usual sand-bar or shoal, were there to be avoided.

The raft on board of which were the constable and his prisoner, was the first to enter the narrow opening, whose agitated waters indicated the peril to be encountered.

Irvin Gaines, who appeared to be suffering greatly from his wound—quite prostrated, in fact—reclined in the pent-house, the watchful officer being not far away. But the condition of the prisoner now seemed to be such as to preclude any idea of escape.

Gaines had begged that his bonds might be loosened somewhat—and Mr. Lawton, in his humanity, granted the request, not without a suspicious survey of the villain, first, however, to assure himself that no mischief was meditated. Surely that groaning form did not possess sufficient strength to make itself its own rescuer.

The raft was surging and driving down the rapids. The attention of all on board was excitedly directed to their progress. The steersmen wielded their huge paddles with consummate skill, and the rough rocks saw the freighted craft that they seemed eager to wreck go safely by.

A cheer arose from the gallant crew as their raft shot forward to the smoother current below.

In that moment, while their gaze was turned toward their comrades behind, a human figure rushed from the pent-house, plunged boldly into the still raging water, and after being carried some distance downward in that, struck out for the shore.

It was Irvin Gaines!

His pretended weakness was gone now—his wound did not disable him in the least. The artful villain had feigned the invalid with an actor's skill, and his reward was freedom.

Lawton had been so absorbed for the moment in viewing the exciting descent of the falls, that he had forgotten all about his prisoner. His chagrin may be imagined as he saw him free once more. He rushed for a rifle, and obtaining one, discharged it at the escaping man, but without effect. For an instant he thought of plunging in after him, but the folly of that was apparent. The chances were altogether in favor of Gaines.

"He's gone, Lawton, and for good," said one of the raftsmen. "Eels and elephants! but I wouldn't ha' thought it. Why, I rather expected him to die aboard before he reached a hangin' spot."

An oath—it was rarely that they came—broke from the lips of Lawton. His mortification and anger were too much for him. Swearing was the safety-valve that kept him from exploding.

"A pretty fellow you'll think I am to catch a knave, or hold him after he is caught! I've a notion to drown myself—I have. What will Starway say, d—n it?—and my two young friends? I never had such luck before. Jail-birds used to have a mighty respect for me, but now they may begin to put their thumbs on their noses. Blast it, I say!"

Unmindful of his self-contempt and reproach, the raft swept on, carrying him far past the point where Gaines had reached the river-bank and disappeared in the woods. The shore was wild and lonely, though a rough road ran down from the heights above. The fugitive was doubtless on familiar ground, and any attempt at pursuit would prove futile.

"He'll have a solid tramp of it to-night, you may bet," said another of the raftsmen. "A man runnin' from the gallows is apt to step lively. Gaines feels the rope around his neck yet, I'll warrant; but he's got the end in his own hand."

The constable ground his teeth.

"The cunning scoundrel! I might have known he was fooling me. I *did* think so; but he lay there panting like a dying buck, and I thought at times *was* going."

"He took you in *slick!*" laughed one of the lumbermen. "More 'possum than buck about that chap."

"You've lost a neat little sum, constable, I take it," said another, "by Gaines givin' you the slip. You've lost your *gains!* haw! haw!"

He laughed boisterously at his wit, and the others as heartily joined him. As for Lawton, their half-taunts and witticisms at his expense did not add anything to his chagrin. That had reached the maximum point before.

The rifle-shot that had been fired reached the ears of our friends further up stream as they were in the midst of the perilous passage described. It startled them considerably, for though it was no unusual thing for a gun to be discharged from a moving raft, they wondered who at that juncture would have a weapon in hand. The crews would be at the oars.

They did not see the form of Gaines as he swam toward shore. That sight would have been a sufficient explanation of the cause of the alarm.

"What has happened?" queried Starway. "That shot was fired from a raft. See! the smoke still floats over the river."

Not until the moorings below were reached and the rafts staked for the night did they learn the truth.

Lawton approached Starway's party, looking the picture of self-humiliation.

"Where is your prisoner, Mr. Lawton?" asked Starway, quickly.

"The prisoner, curse him—"

"Is gone!" said Starway, finishing the startling sentence the constable dreaded to speak.

"Yes."

"Escaped? and alive?"

"Even so; the villain tricked me, though I deserve a flogging for permitting him to do it."

And he explained the matter of Gaines's escape.

"This is unfortunate, Lawton," remarked Starway, looking very grave. "I do not censure you, but regret exceedingly that the prisoner escaped. He will make us trouble in the future, I do not doubt. Gaines is implacable in his enmities, and never gives up the thought of revenge."

"I would give my right hand for a hold upon him with my left," said the officer in a tone that indicated he meant what he said. "This affair is not to my credit, sir."

"Gaines is a confederate of River Rick, if not the real leader of the band," pursued Starway, ignoring Lawton's self-reproach. "He is a pest to the commonwealth; but it is as a personal enemy he is most to be dreaded. I am thinking of Flossa," he continued aside to Philip. "She will need our close protection now indeed. Gaines will never abandon the persecution of her while he lives."

Flossa did not hear these words, but the fact that her enemy was again at large was sufficiently terrifying to her. Since that trying interview with him after her service to the prisoners at the Seven Pines, she had thought of him only with fear and trembling. The close glimpse she then obtained of his wicked heart produced an impression on her mind that no amount of after protestations of good will could erase.

"Irvin Gaines has saved himself for the present, at least, from the consequences of his crimes, Flossa," said Philip Wayne, who divined the drift of her thoughts, and desired to quiet her rising apprehensions. "It may be hoped that we shall never hear of him again, though since he bears with him the secret of your parentage, it is doubly to be regretted that he has regained his freedom. We hoped to extort a confession from him at last. But do not distress yourself with unnecessary fears concerning him; the doom of the evil doer will overtake him, and he will be powerless to harm you. As to the mystery that attends your early life, I am confident we shall solve that, even without his unwilling aid."

"He is gone," said Starway, "and it is useless to lament the fact. Pursuit might be attempted, but the raftsmen give it as their opinion that he could not be recaptured. He is doubtless well on his way to some haunt of safety, and does not find his wound as disabling, probably, as we could wish. Let us forget him for the present."

The scene of the preceding evening was soon reproduced in the blazing raft-fires, the bustle, and the later grouping of the lumbermen in their little camp-circles. The savor of the evening feast ascended the still air, and song, music and merriment were heard again.

When Flossa retired that night, it was with no thought of danger to herself: still less was the return of Irvin Gaines to the vicinity apprehended.

Meanwhile the fugitive, congratulating himself on his clever tricking of the constable, and rejoicing over his well-won freedom, pursued his way with all possible haste through the thick growth of timber that covered the narrow valley bottom. His wound, though ghastly in appearance, and at times painful, was not disabling, and he made good progress.

"Good-bye," he muttered as he went along: "good-bye for the time, though I hope to see some of you again. That cursed constable! I don't care to meet *him*, for he's sharp enough, if I *have* tricked him twice. First I wanted badly to get him, and then I wanted even worse to *leave* him; I succeeded in both cases. Ha! ha!" and he chuckled triumphantly.

His anxiety was to elude immediate pursuit; and then he believed he should be safe.

After a time he paused and looked around him. His path had led him to the mountain road, which we have mentioned. He ascended it some distance, and then halted again.

Evening was shadowing the scene. Looking southward, from his elevated position, he saw through the gathering gloom the slowly rising smoke that marked the locality of the raftmen's encampment.

"I am none too far away," he muttered, "but I don't think I am followed. Ugh! it is chilly here."

He shivered in his wet clothes.

"Twould be comfortable by the side of a raft-fire; but I'd rather freeze than hang. What am I to do for the night. I wonder if there's any shelter hereabouts. Hold!" he cried, as if a pleasing idea had occurred to him.

"I am just below the Breakers. I used to have friends in this region—acquaintances it wouldn't always be safe to be seen with—but I'll seek them now. Ugh! but it is cold!"

He resumed his flight—if flight it now need be called—changing his direction, and appearing to know quite well whither he was going.

By the time darkness had fully descended, he had reached a rude forest-tavern, more forbidding in its aspect than the one of which he was absent proprietor.

Without hesitation he entered the place. A bright fire of crackling pine-knots and hickory illuminated the small apartment. The figures of two or three rough-clad men were near the fire. No one was at the bar, and the new-comer approached the others. He scanned closely the features of the occupants of the room, who were equally interested in his own appearance. One of them suddenly rose with a look of surprised recognition on his face.

Gaines also started as he obtained a nearer view of the man who had risen.

"Irvin Gaines!" exclaimed the latter, in astonishment.

"River Rick!" was the amazed but delighted response of the former.

CHAPTER XII.

FLOSSA'S PERIL.

The individual whom Irvin Gaines so joyfully greeted was indeed the notorious desperado of the Delaware—River Rick.

He was short in stature, dark-faced, and possessed a most sinister expression of countenance. His square, heavy figure would seem to indicate that he lacked agility of movement, though his step was stealthy and cat-like, denoting habitual caution. Whoever supposed that his awkward form would make him a burgler in midnight prowls, and unfitted him for flight, pursuit or any action requiring celerity of movement, would be mistaken in their opinion of his accomplishments in that line.

His spring was like that of a tiger, as swift and as sure; his grip was strong as a giant's, and his heavy feet could touch a hard surface with the softness of a bear walking on moss.

While his appearance denoted the ruffian alone, there was a concealed capacity in him that lifted him to the level of the "professional" villain. He was to be dreaded both as a planner and an executor of his plans.

"What brings you here in this plight?" was the question he addressed to Gaines after his exclamation of recognition. "I thought you safe at the Seven Pines."

Gaines glanced suspiciously at the strangers present, and at the tavern-keeper who had just entered.

"Do not be afraid to speak," said River Rick. "These fellows are all to be trusted."

"Before I explain matters, I'd thank the landlord for a change of clothing. It's deuced damp in these."

"Yes, sir," spoke their host with alacrity. "That is if you're willin' to put up with anything that's clean and dry. Folks in these parts generally don't have many duds to spare."

"Anything will do that I can put myself in," said Gaines with slight impatience. "I'll warm up inside first though, if you please."

He stepped to the dingy bar in the corner and called for whisky, inviting the others to take a glass with him. After swallowing the stuff he passed into an adjoining apartment, and changed his wet attire for a homespun suit that looked decidedly the worse for wear. Re-entering the bar-room, he arranged his soaked garments before the fire to dry, and then proceeded to give his companion an account of his adventures.

River Rick listened with patience, save now and then to put in an expletive that showed an undesirable familiarity with profane terms.

"High times you've had up there since I left," he remarked when Gaines had finished his narrative. "It seems I must watch the whole river-line or something goes wrong. I can't be everywhere. What sent that constable up among the raftsmen? Had he any particular clue to our operations, I wonder?"

"Can't say," answered Gaines reflectively, "unless it was suspected that some of them big lumber-dealers who often carry their cash with 'em, and who now and then disappear so quick and quiet-like, you know,"—he winked wickedly and meaningly—"were picked off for the sake of their pockets, instead of falling from rafts, freezing on the hills, and all that."

"It may be. We must draw in a little, Gaines."

"It's the loss of that gal that troubles me now. She knows more n is good for her. She is bound to blow against us—has blowed, and her tongue ain't to be stopped but in one way. I wouldn't like anything bad to happen to her just yet though, for she's worth considerable to me in a private way."

"Ah!"

"Yes, you never have heard the facts, and I won't tell 'em now; but there's money in that secret."

"Danger, too, I should say, at least in the gal. You say she's on the raft, with that old grizzle of a Starway—he's another block to business, I'm thinkin'—and them two young cubs."

"Yes."

"And that possession of her person would be valuable to them that knows how to manage the matter."

"I do say that," was the answer with emphasis.

"I won't trouble you for particulars, Gaines. To tell you the truth, I'm a mite interested in that silk-haired thing myself, independent of her cash value."

"She's worse nor any young panther, Rick."

"I'd clip her claws."

"Not so easy to be done."

"Well, never mind that now. Do you think she might be nabbed from that raft?"

The question, implying such a bold movement, rather startled Gaines.

"What?" he cried, "you don't mean to try that?"

"I've undertaken more ticklish jobs before. But you haven't given me your opinion."

"*I* wouldn't like to go back to that raft, I swear, but if—"

"I don't ask that of you, Gaines; it would be a little too much. That wound must stiffen you a little; you'd have to give in if pressed hard any distance. I am fresh, and Daze, here, is just the man for a venture of the kind. So, if you think there's a chance of success, we won't be long in finding out what it's worth."

"Have you a boat at hand?"

"A good, light batteau—equal to a reg'lar canoe."

"Well, then, if you're willin' to go among them quick-eared raftsmen, and think you can dodge their rifle-balls if you're seen, I don't hesitate to say there is a chance; but a mighty shady one."

"They'll not dream of an attack to-night—or a visit rather; I don't want to use any powder."

"I don't know," returned Gaines, dubiously. "They're powerful choice of their arrangements. Flossie will be well guarded."

"If I could hit the right raft, with no peepin' and feelin' to do, the thing wouldn't be the hardest. Not any worse than getting into a chamber at midnight, where the sleepers are all dreamin' of River Rick, and every pillow has two pistols under it"

"I reckon not. There'd be no trouble in strikin' Flossie's raft, I think. They're got a reg'lar house built on it—chimney and all, I believe—you'd know it by that; for if you could see anything you could see that."

"Yes; they're staked at the cove below, you say?"

"The first eddy after the Breakers are passed."

"I know the spot—there's precious few I don't know along the Delaware—and I'll take a row along the moored rafts to-night, if nothing more—Daze and me."

The person who bore this intimidating name expressed his willingness to share the perils of the enterprise.

The details of the plan to seize Flossa were quickly arranged. The contingency of successful pursuit, in case the girl was taken from the raft, but her friends aroused, was thought to be provided against. Gaines, in safe concealment, was to await the result of the attempt, and if separation from his confederates became more than transiently necessary, a point for their future meeting was agreed upon.

About midnight the outlaw leader and his companion departed on their villainous venture.

Flossa Gordon at that hour lay dreaming, not of danger, but of peace and security. Hitherto her mind during the periods of slumber had usually been disturbed by apprehensions born of the exciting and painful experiences that had lately been hers. Her sleep had been fitful and unrefreshing; the evil face of Irvin Gaines seemed to watch her from the realm of shadows, and she would awake with a terrified start, to be soothed, happily however, as she sank again to repose, by the imagined protecting presence of Starway and her lover. Their assuring faces shone upon her in the darkness, and before them the sinister countenance of her persecutor paled and disappeared.

But the second night of the downward passage, her slumber, until the central hour of darkness, had been deep, unbroken and refreshing. Visions came to her it is true, but they were quiet visions of peace and joy. A subdued delight pervaded her unconsciousness, giving a smile to her lovely sleeping features, and motionless expression to her whole figure.

Who has not gazed upon the slumbering form of some dear one when this was the condition of the sleeper? A soft and unexciting rapture appears to be theirs—"a lovely languor" which is repose—a heavenly, though indolent, delight. The awakening from such a state may be, and usually is, sudden and confused, whether or not there be an alarming cause.

So Flossa slept, revelling, perhaps, in a future stripped of all possibility of pain, or living again her childhood with every shadow withdrawn from it. Her gentle, regular breathing was softly to be heard, but, apart from that, not the slightest sound or movement. Suddenly the brightness faded from her dreams. A horror, silent, dread and undefined, seemed to fill the rude apartment in which she was.

The breathing of the sweet sleeper became heavy and oppressed. She attempted to struggle—to rise from her couch, but a strange inability possessed her. She was paralyzed by the presence of a viewless peril, of which instinct endeavored to apprise her, but was powerless to arouse her.

A silent, creeping figure approaches her—a breathing shadow, darker than the night itself. Nearer and nearer it came, until the fluttering breath of the maiden was to be be felt.

A powerful hand was laid with a treacherous gentleness upon her. Had the cruel touch been less soft it might have startled her from that spell of horror; as it was, she only shrank shivering away with a sort of gasping sigh.

She was folded in the arms of that demon-like presence—she was being borne silently away. Her abductor at this moment struck his foot against some unseen obstruction. The sound—as midnight sounds are wont to be—was startlingly distinct. A smothered curse broke from his lips.

Unconsciously he pressed his arms with pained hardness around her. A cry escaped her. The spell at last was broken!

In an instant all was alarm and confusion.

A fearful oath—it was no smothered malediction this time—burst from the lips of River Rick. He dropped his precious burden and glided toward his boat.

Every raftsman had been aroused, and the villain knew his danger. His confederate, with lifted oars, was awaiting his return, and the moment he touched the batteau it shot from the raft, keeping in the shadow of the shore as much as possible.

But the escaping couple were discovered. A rifle was discharged at them, the quick blaze of the gun gleaming like a lightning flash across the water, and hastening, if that could be, the flight of the villains.

Another and another followed. A cry of mortal agony arose from the flying boat. The man at the oars dropped to the bottom, but River Rick sprang to his place, and with a few powerful strokes sent it forward into the concealing darkness.

Starway, Philip Wayne, Frank Leighton and others, rushed on the raft where Flossa had been sleeping, as they fancied, in perfect security.

"What is it, Flossa?" cried her lover, in wild alarm. "Can it be possible that your enemies have again disturbed you?"

But he received no answer to his eager, excited words

The poor girl lay in a swoon of terror near the entrance to the pent-house. Her brief awakening, that came near being fatally delayed, had revealed to her—or rather she had at once thereupon comprehended—the terrible truth that she was again in the hands of an enemy.

"Poor thing!" said Starway, as they bore her back to her couch; "her abduction has been attempted. Thank God that the alarm came in time to save her!"

He shuddered as he realized how near the attempt to bear her off had proved successful.

"Can it be possible that Irvin Gaines has ventured here?" asked Frank Leighton, in amazement.

Starway looked perplexed.

"It cannot be," he said. "He must have fallen in with some members of the outlaw-band, and sent them to do this work—or else the enemies of Flossa are more numerous and vigilant than we suspect."

"We imagined that she was safely guarded, almost surrounded as she was by these sharp-eared men. How *could* any one enter her apartment, without arousing them?"

"The thing has been done, as we have serious proof. These outlaws move with the silence and celerity of Indians. We cannot be too careful of our fair charge. I did not dream of such an attempt being made so soon—though I was sure that Gaines's first thought after his escape, was how to recover possession of the person of Flossa. We must be more than vigilant hereafter."

Flossa, under the tender care of Philip, had now revived, and gave a coherent account of the sensations that preceded her terrified awakening from her slumber, and the brief but dreadful events that followed.

Pale and trembling still, she clung to her lover, as if fearing that the peril was not yet past.

"How they hunt me!" she exclaimed in a tremulous tone of fear.

"They do indeed," he returned with a blaze of vengeful indignation in his dark eyes as he gazed upon her cowering form. "But quiet yourself now, Flossa, and fear no further evil. You will in a few days reach safety that will seem like Heaven itself after all these alarms and excitements. We did not dream that an enemy would approach you so soon; and so we slept, though near you. Hereafter you shall be jealously guarded indeed."

His words had their effect, and soon her nervous fearfulness departed. Starway, after adding other assurances to those of Philip, left the cabin in company with the latter, and Flossa was again alone. But she knew that a protecting presence was near, and she feared not the return of that dark, incarnate shadow that had changed so cruelly the color and current of her dreams.

In the meantime the raftsmen had not been idle. The boat containing the bold midnight visitors to the raft had vanished in the darkness, but pursuit of the villains was, nevertheless, attempted.

On one of the rafts was a small batteau, which had been quickly launched and filled with armed pursuers. Striking out in the direction in which the hostile boat was last seen, in a short time they reached the opposite shore. The batteau of River Rick was almost immediately discovered, run up upon the sand, but not fastened. In the bottom of the boat lay the man, Daze, dead! A rifle-ball had entered his breast, and his career of wickedness was ended. Relinquishing the pursuit at this point, the raftsmen returned to the moorings, satisfied to know that one of the villains had met a deserved fate.

The night passed without further alarm, though Flossa found it impossible to compose herself to slumber. When daylight began to steal over the hills she arose. Sunrise came, and so peaceful, so fair was the scene, that the startling event of the night was to her like the memory of a hideous dream.

She received afresh the congratulations of her friends, of whom none was more demonstrative in his expressions of delight at the failure of the attempt to abduct her than Pat McNally.

"And he drapped ye, did he, Miss Flossie?" cried the ardent Irishman. "And that's what *I* wouldn't have done had I been the thafe—bad luck to him! If by raison of me sinfulness I should iver have come stalin' ye, it's stuck to ye I would, the same as to a cold petatie, which I'm not comparin' ye to at all, at all, only by way of expressin' me determination. But I was not the thafe, nor nather of 'em—back luck to 'em both! And that same has come to one of 'em, wid a bullet-hole in his brist, and no more power to do ye evil. It's not pretendin' he is, be-dad, like Misther Gaines!"

Flossa looked inquiringly at Starway. She did not understand this allusion to the dead ruffian.

"One of your enemies perished last night," said Starway. "We did not inform you of the fact then, as it would only have added to your excitement. May others of your foes take warning by his fate."

Flossa shuddered. How many more lives, she thought, were to be sacrificed because of her? She feared that next a friend might fall, though thus far she had lost only her faithful fawn.

"To think of that nager a-bearin' ye off," continued Pat, "and we a dramin' round like so many mourners the first night afther a wake. Ooh! Miss Flossie! don't be trustin' yerself to us any more! Where was our ears? where was our wits? to say nothing of the natural scint we should have for the prisence of evil. That murtherin' thafe a-crapin' toward ye in the dark, and niver a move from us all! It distrisses me to think of it. I'd have thought that aven me owld violin would have been uneasy under the cirkimstances, and given a note by way of warnin'. I'm perplixed to know how it could kape still."

Flossa, Philip and Starway all smiled. There had been something humorous in the Irishman's manner all along, but this last conceit of his was decidedly amusing.

"Blood of the apostles! Miss Flossie—if ye'll pardon me far spakin' in that inprisive way, but I get excited, I do, when I think of it all, ye see."

"I am sure it is not to be wondered at, Patrick," interrupted the lovely girl, "that none of you were aroused by the villain. He came with the stealthiness of a panther, I do not doubt, and you were all deep in slumber, wearied by the previous day's excitement."

"Now, then, Miss Flossie," expostulated the Irisman, "don't ye address me by the name of Patrick; that's a dacent name, and fit fur a gintleman, not fur a sapleen like mesilf. I knew it was slapin' strong we were, but what's that in the way of our defence? The saints thimselves couldn't be excused for not stirrin'. However, I'd betther hould me jaw or ye'll think I'm too hard on the rist of 'em, though I mane it all for mesilf."

Flossa smilingly assured him that she did not think him deserving of such self reproach, but he was not to be at once composed.

"If iver a thafe comes again wid the intintion of stalin' ye—which now I don't wonder at, seein' it's yer own swate silf they're afther—may I be near, and if I don't hear him, I'll hear the splash of me own slapy body in the wather, fur I'll dhrown mesilf, I will, out of pure contimpt. There, now, Miss Flossie, will ye belave me?"

"I have every confidence in your future devotion to me, Patrick," was Flossa's smiling answer.

"Pat, if ye plaze, till I'm deservin' of the rist of it. Here I am, wearin' the name of a saint, and mesilf such a careless sinner. There's no since in that, sure! But thank ye, Miss Flossie, fur yer retintion of me in yer favor. It's betther I'll do nixt time, I promise ye. They're unmoorin' the rafts, and I'll lave ye."

Pat departed to assist in pushing off.

"You have a true friend in him," said Starway.

"In him and many others," replied the grateful girl.

The rafts were now in motion again, and with song and cheer the voyage was resumed. Swiftly down the noble stream they swept on its still swollen tide.

That day and the next passed without any unpleasant occurrence, and then Frank Leighton's home was reached. Ravenswood came next in view, and in a short time the final landing was made. Flossa was conducted to the promised haven of security and rest, where she found new friends and a quiet, Quaker welcome, as sincere as it was simple. The story of her wrongs, sufferings and perplexities was told by Frank Leighton, and the doors of the peaceful homestead opened to receive her as if she had been a daughter of the house. Our next chapter must be descriptive of our fair heroine's new home and friends.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ In order to quiet the maiden's fears of their constancy, their lovers in the eastern part of Maine bind themselves by a promissory note as follows—

HAMPDEN, Maine, Sept. 10, 1872.

Dear Mary—I promise to marry you in six months from date. Yours lovingly,

E. N.

☞ The editor of a live Michigan newspaper, that is first run through a press in Chicago, says in a recent issue: "Three new subscribers came last week, so our list rolls up. We shall soon hire a man to run our press, as we cannot furnish brains and everything else at the present subscription price of one dollar a year."

☞ Rev. Henry Austin, of Texas, preaches with his hat on to cover the place where his scalp once was.

☞ J. DeCordova is lecturing on "The First Baby." The first baby is enough to make a man lecture, sometimes. And so is the seventh.

BETTER SO.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Florence Wilder wasn't a school-mate of mine, but her Cousin Annie was, and that is the way we became acquainted. Annie and I were much older, and, at the time of which I write she was married, had a husband and two-year-old baby, and lived in a charming little villa in the suburbs of St. Christopher; that isn't the name of the place, but then I don't want you to know its real name, and St. Christopher will do as well as any other.

I lived hundreds of miles away in another State, but I made a point every summer of spending several weeks with my old friend, and it was a peculiarity with us that we never met with a sort of embarrassament after our year's parting, as so many people do; but instead of feeling stiff, and ill at ease and critical, for the first few days, we took each other up at the very point where we had parted, and went on perfectly contented and contenting until our parting and meeting came again. We seldom corresponded either in the interim, and when we did, made no confidences on paper, scarcely spoke of death or loss or illness, but if a little poem had pleased us, or the thought of some great author, or a book, or only some noble deed that one had heard of and the other could not know—those we wrote. A strange correspondence you will say, but it bore its fruit. We were always *en rapport*. Neither outgrew the other, and this I take it was the secret of our faithfulness.

Annie, as I have told you, was married—and mated which was more to the purpose. I too had my romance, great or small, what matters it? It was dead, buried, put out of sight. Sometimes I fancied violets were growing over it—sometimes rue. I tell this story in desultory fashion, and it comes to me here to describe my friend. She was short, but carrying her small height so straightly that the effect was that of a much taller woman. She was a little inclined to embonpoint, and so sensitive on the subject that she treasured her weight as most people do their ages, a most cherished secret. Her eyes were that faithfullest of all colors in eyes, a bluish-gray, neither very large nor small, but with a sweet womanliness in their expression. She had excellent white teeth and a profusion of light-brown hair arranged becomingly, but not in too pronounced a fashion, as was the style, and her dress expressed herself.

Her Cousin Florence Wilder was as like her and as unlike as one could very well be. That is she had a still greater, more wonderful profusion of light-brown hair—the same bluish-gray eyes, only larger and sweeter, asking eyes that stood on the threshold of Life and beseeched its good will. There were the same excellent white teeth, the same manner of mouth, well-defined lips meeting softly but firmly, and pink cheeks fading into healthy paler tints in the rest of her complexion, instead of the orthodox red and white of old-fashioned novels. There all resemblance between the cousins ended. Florence's nose was straighter than Annie's, and she had a cleft in her firm chin, and was as tall and straight and slender as a young Indian.

I am opposed to meeting with too many people, and to me an overplus of characters in a story is distracting, so I shall not pause to describe Annie's husband, except to say that his name was Southwood; Southwood Jones if you must have the whole of it, and I have always had the greatest respect for his father or mother or whoever it was that had the sense and dignity to give him such a quaint, good, unusual name to balance that of Jones, which we all know is good enough, sufficiently quaint, but not at all unusual. For the rest he was a quiet, cultivated, self-contained Christian gentleman.

There is only one other character to introduce to you to make our dramatis personæ complete, and that is Florence's lover. His name was Rossitur, Angus Rossitur—a strange one, you will say, but his mother was Scotch and his father Irish-Spanish. That is to say, after the battle of the Boyne, when so many French and Spaniards emigrated from their homes to Ireland, his father's ancestors came from Spain and located in the north of Ireland, near Londonderry. There his father, when quite a young man, married his Scotch wife and removed to America, settled in New York and continued his business of publishing, with many difficulties at first, and much success afterwards. There the little Angus was born, educated as a lawyer, finally appointed, through some political influence and more personal grace, to the position of consul in some English inland town, and was now home again, lawyering, about to marry our Florence and settle.

Angus was a person concerning whom most people quarrelled, his friends liking him very much and his enemies disliking him very much. Indeed, opinions concerning him were as equally divided as his hair, and that was parted straight down the middle. I don't object to that myself, though many people did, neither do I object to a gentleman's dressing like a gentleman, with exquisite, white, well-fitting linen and stylish clothes, worn gracefully and without slovenliness. But perhaps I should have thought lavender kids a touch too much for provincial St. Christopher, only that one day I saw him helping an aged beggar woman across a crowded street with fastidious gloved fingers, kindly and firmly clasping her arm, and after that his lavenders were sanctified in my eyes.

Angus had lived long enough with the English to adopt some of their gentlemanly ways, without losing any of the ease of manner, oftentimes degenerating into carelessness, which characterizes the American style. He never lounged in the presence of ladies, or crossed his legs, or played with his fingers, and always held the door open for a lady to pass out, and had many little undefined agreeable ways, which were very pleasant, unless you were his enemy, and then you called him affected, pedantic and a fop. I wasn't his enemy. I was his friend. For the rest he was tall, blonde, blue-eyed and bonny. He had many virtues, many graces, a genial manner and a kind, good heart; but alas! for the flaws that came into the world with the first who came, and will go with the last who leave, Angus was fickle. I don't think many people knew this—I can't think where he got it from—not from his Scotch mother, not from his upright, faithful father, perhaps from some Milesian ancestor a hundred years back. In his younger years—for he was now over thirty—he had broken many hearts, not wilfully, scarcely wittingly, but none the less surely. I think he was a puzzle to himself and a sore displeasure, but he could not help it. Lately, until he met Florence, he had held aloof, sought the society of those older than himself, and of married ladies and of little children; he was a chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*, and though few understood his motives and many rallied and laughed at him, he was respected by all. None but himself and one or two others knew this taint of his spirit, inborn, inbred, mourned over and ineradicable. Understand me, he had been called a flirt, known as a flirt, understood as a flirt, and few could or would believe that in each case he had been, for the time being, in sacred earnest, that was the worst of it—he never trifled or permitted it in others. But after awhile he fell away, sadly, remorsefully, but surely. It was after he grew older, and could and did analyze his character and motives, it was then that he shunned all society that could allure.

I knew him well—no matter how—he lived in the same city with me, and I had my own reasons for studying him—reasons that found their *raison d'être* in a pang. In fact, we had struck up a sort of friendship in a quiet way. I was not so very much older than he, but I felt old enough to be his grandmother, and he used to take a deal of satisfaction in my practical, what he called quaint remarks, on people and things. Once he asked me if I wouldn't please call him Angus. I said, very gravely, "Yes, if he wished it," and after that we were better friends than ever.

He was faithful in his friendships. I knew that, never one more faithful, and in his faithfulness and in his fickleness, so like—so like.

I don't know whether I have told you that Florence lived with her Cousin Annie; had for many years; was an orphan with a competence, like a younger sister to Annie and her husband, and a dear friend to me.

Florence's character was sterling. She was sweetly gracious to all; many loved her, all admired, and four people knew her, a former teacher, Southwood, Southwood's wife and myself, until—but of that afterward. She was very definite; older, with more power and less sweetness, I could fancy her, under some circumstances, arbitrary. That is—her firmness leaned that way. In her personal appointments she was exquisitely clean, methodical and neat, and gave an idea of culture that extended from the core of her soul out; instead of the mere veneering, which so many people seem to possess. Her range of reading was not very wide, but what she knew, she knew perfectly, and her possibilities of acquirement were great, each day added something. She liked the more sensible part of work—the making of bread in contradistinction to that of cake, plain sewing instead of fancy work; but she did not disdain anything which made another happy, and esteemed herself blessed if she had pleased only a servant, a beggar or a little child. She had one thing in common with her Cousin Annie, with strong individuality she was very easy to get along with, and that, I take it, is unusual. She spent very little time over her toilet, but dressed with care and elegance. Again, I liken her to her Cousin Annie—her dress expressed herself. She was an Episcopalian in religion and a bigot in her faith. Like most young people, she was bitterly intolerant of anything opposed to her ideas of right and wrong. I find that charity is of later growth, and seldom an original ingredient in people's character. Annie, Southwood and I used to laugh quietly, and half sadly, over her vehement denunciation of people, things, and abstract principles. One thing she possessed to a surprising degree, and that was faithfulness; and one thing she hated with all the scorn of her young, strong nature, and that was fickleness.

She had much musical cultivation; never sang in any other language than English, and never, by any possibility, anything that the people about her were acquainted with. Her peculiarity concerning this was so great, that if she ever heard one of her own songs on another's lips, or knew of its being heard anywhere, she quietly dropped it from her repertoire. And yet she possessed the saddest, quaintest, perfectest collection ever known. I have known her to be in a room full of strangers, overshadowed by many a more brilliant presence, until some one asked her to sing. She never obtruded herself, and never refused, and, after the first low, pathetic, startling notes of her beautiful contralto voice, people would hush themselves and look at her, breathless with attention, and after the first song would crowd about her, and ask eagerly for more, and more, and more. For myself there were moods in which her music broke my heart, and other when it healed it; and others still, when cold, lifeless, and dumb, I was pierced through and through with sorrow and penitence.

Well, you have them as they were—Florence and Angus—and what evil fate brought two such totally opposite characters together, I cannot imagine. The news fell on me like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, and fell in this wise:

I had just arrived in St. Christopher, on my usual summer visit, and on the first night, after dinner, Southwood, Annie and I were having our coffee outside under the trees, and laughing and chatting over the various changes, personal and otherwise, which had come about during the year.

"And Florence," I said—I had learned before, that she was spending a few days with her former teacher, of whom I have elsewhere made casual mention—and would be at home on the morrow. "I suppose Florence is almost married by this time?"

"Yes," said Annie. "She expects to be married in the fall, in October."

"Indeed!" I said, interested and half startled, "whom to?"

"To Angus Rossitur, an acquaintance of Southwood's, a friend of his cousin's, a lawyer, a gentleman, rich, well-connected, and splendid."

"Yes, indeed, capital fellow," said Southwood.

They told me a great deal more—of his noble looks, his gracious manners, his honorable character, while I listened as one in a dream. I sipped my coffee, slowly, half distractedly—and then excused myself, in order to unpack my trunks and settle myself, I said. I knew that Annie would follow me at once—and that was what I wanted.

When she entered the room a few moments afterward, I went toward her excitedly, and said,

"Annie, Florence must not marry that man, shall not; how long has she been engaged?"

"Three months; but what is the matter, dear, do you know him?"

"Yes," I said, in a still more excited tone. "She has been engaged to him three months—she will marry him in four. I'll guarantee he will love her for a year, perhaps two—for Florence must be very fascinating to one who loves her, and she will chain even him that long, and after that the bitterness of death will be hers. Do you remember my experience," I went on, wildly, "well, Angus Rossitur is just such another."

Annie became very grave and pale, but she drew me over to another part of the room where we sat down on the side of the bed.

"So," she said, steadily and reproachfully, and still keeping my hand, "you have known this man a long while, and never told me; this might have been prevented."

"No, I have not known him a long time. I have known of him always, as we both know many people of not sufficient importance to speak of even to each other—but this last winter we met at a series of Dramatic Sociables, formed almost entirely of married people, and ineligible spinsters like myself. There was a good deal said at the time of his joining us, much wonder and gossip that he did not join a younger society—indeed, much grumbling among mothers and daughters to that effect. But he did join us, seemed very happy, and made himself very useful and agreeable to every one and devoted to none, so that finally gossip died away."

I then told her all I knew of his life and character, all that I understood of his motives, and that I had hoped he was noble enough to have resisted any temptation.

"The mystery is explained," said Annie, "Florence, Southwood, and I met him at Cousin John's. He was wonderfully agreeable company, but paid no attention to Florence whatever, which I thought unusual, you know, she is so much admired and sought after. We met him again, in various places, during the two weeks he spent here in the winter, but she seemed to make no more impression on him than I did. I felt rather piqued for her, not that I dreamed of him in any other light than that of an acquaintance, but I thought him foreign and lordly, and that he considered most of the people of St. Christopher beneath his notice. Just before his return I gave a little quadrille party, to which he was invited and came. There he heard Florie sing, and that was the beginning of it. I never saw a man more madly in love in my life. He returned home, as was his intention, but came back for a day or two every fortnight, and always came here, and you see the end of it."

"Does Florence love him?"

"How can you ask it? You know what her character is and disposition, and how few she cares for. She has given him her whole soul."

"Well, Annie," I said again, "she must not marry him. We must break it in some way. Better a heartache now, for a few years, than a life-long torture."

"I don't know what can be done," said Annie, gloomily.

"I know. I'll take her to Europe with me this fall. I have been wanting to go for some time."

"All the going to Europe in the world won't do her any good. You know how faithful she is, and that she won't believe one word we can say against him. And he is such a splendid fellow too. Oh, what a pity!"

"Annie, go down and talk it over with Southwood, you know he has great influence over her, and get him to interfere."

Annie consented, and I sat by the window and looked out upon the stars and the faint new moon, and leaned my head upon my hand and thought of my lost life, and of Florence and of Angus. Poor Florence, poor Angus, which was to be more pitied? I could not tell.

Annie returned after awhile, looking more cheerful than when she went.

"Southwood doesn't take the same view with you at all, and he refuses to interfere himself or let me. He says all young fellows are flirts, and that Angus is just as honorable as can be, and that Florence's influence and marriage will steady him as much as even you could desire, so cheer up dear and look on the bright side."

I refused to be cheered. I thought Southwood and Annie both crazy. I think so still. But my hands were tied, I could say nothing, do nothing but look on in agony while these two splendid creatures walked to their doom.

At Annie's request I consented to keep utter silence. I am glad now that it was so. Glad with all my heart that they found their Heaven in each other's arms—you are surprised, but wait.

What a sweet summer we had. Florence returned. Angus came. Southwood and Annie renewed their own glowing youth in the youth of the lovers, and I—I buried my memories and my fears, and strove to be joyous with the rest.

We walked such sunny paths together—we drove, we rode, we boated, and when twilight came, Southwood, Annie and I lounged on the verandah or underneath the trees outside, while the lovers lingered within and sometimes sang together while we held our breaths to listen, and oftener were silent. As the weeks sped on, no cloud overspread our horizon, no voice bid us catch each flying blessed moment and niche it in our memories forever. Common moments they seemed, sweet as the summer, but only heralds of pleasanter hours to come, and still the days sped on, and it was September—yellow, mellow, splendid September. And the last hour struck.

It was the first day of the month, and we were all at breakfast, Angus said—

"What shall we do with ourselves to-day? Let's have a grand merry-making, for to-morrow I must over the hills and far away."

"It seems to me we have been merry-making all summer, Mr. Angus Rossitur," said Florence, "but, of course, a butterfly like you must have a few more flings in the sunshine before the winter comes."

"I wish my winter came sooner," said Angus gayly—this in allusion to their approaching marriage.

More idle words; foolish badinage, so fond, so foolish, so sweet; then the day was arranged, first a ride, since the morning was so balmy, and then, but then never came.

Angus and Florence took the low pony phaeton, and Florence drove. Southwood put Annie and me in the rockaway, and tucked us carefully in. Time was too precious for him to waste it in a morning junketing he said, and laughed and lifted his hat and left us. It was all so careless. Life seemed so sure, so easy.

The phaeton took the lead. Florence had unbound her hair and let the winds toss it, and we could see that Angus's bonny head rested on her shoulder. Snatches of laughter and bits of song came floating back to us, but we could hear no words. Once, in the long lonely lanes, he took her in his arms and kissed her, as we could see, with passionate earnestness. I don't think either knew how near we were behind them.

"Oh, he loves her—he loves her. I'm sure it will last," said Annie eagerly.

"I hope so," I said, and we drove on after that in silence. Our road lay quite by the river shore for a distance, and presently, in front, uprose the railroad bridge flung from bank to bank.

What followed seems a dream, from which even now I try to rouse myself and waken. The phaeton had passed just beyond the bridge, and we were still beneath it, when, with a scream from the locomotive the cars passed over in a swift rush. Both horses were accustomed to the train, but for some reason, that attached to the phaeton became frightened and unmanageable. We saw it turn toward the water, we saw Angus rise, take the reins and strive to urge it toward land again. In vain—in a flash, horse, phaeton and riders were struggling in the deep current. For one pale anguished instant Angus seized Florence in his arms, and struck out boldly for the land—the next, clasped heart to heart and lip to lip, they sank from sight.

* * * * *

I have just come from looking at them where they lie asleep; so young, so pale, so pathetic. But they sank, clasped heart to heart and lip to lip, their lives filled to the brim; and, while my very soul breaks and writhes with the loss and anguish, I think of the "might have been," and cry, "better so—better so."

Is it not better so?

H. B.

☞ A physician of Berne, D. Ernest Guisan, announces that arsenic will prevent the development of hydrophobia in persons bitten by mad dogs. In sufficient doses, we can readily believe it.

☞ The press of Missouri calls for a law awarding death as the punishment for placing obstructions on railroad tracks.

☞ A woman came into Springfield, Illinois, recently, to buy an artificial lower jaw for her son, who had been blowing down a gun barrel.

☞ The ladies of Illinois get together in crowds and go out to hunt rabbits. The rabbit crop hasn't thinned out any, however.

☞ A lady's hat, with all its trimmings and a bandbox, was lately sent from California to Maine for eleven cents postage.

☞ In Denver they use jacks of diamonds for wedding cards.

☞ A reporter was disturbed one night by a noise, which proved to be occasioned by a man fallen at his door in a fit, when he cried to his better-half, "Mary, Mary, bring my note-book and a candle directly; here's a paragraph come to the door."

☞ Duluth gives fashion an impetus by issuing birch bark reception cards. The next thing in order, we suppose, will be admitting people on "tickets of *leaves*."

Under the Mistletoe.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY BELLE BREMER.

Whirling, eddying, everywhere the snow—beautiful symbol of purity—came down right merrily, drifting by the fences and hedgerows and in the hollows, and clothing the earth in a robe of dazzling whiteness.

"What splendid sleighing it will be," thought Kitty Mayo, standing by the window watching the feathery flakes as they silently fell to the ground. "I wonder if any one will take me sleighing this evening. I hope, if anybody does, it will be Will Darrel, he has such splendid horses that it is a treat to get a ride behind them." Kitty, little hypocrite, tried to persuade herself that it was on account of his fine turnout that she preferred going with Will Darrel. Really it was on account of himself. Will Darrel's passionate black eyes had won what her numerous admirers had tried in vain to win, the heart of pretty Kate Mayo. But not for the world would she have owned it, even to herself.

For two years she had queened it right royally over her willing subjects, holding their hearts in her little palm; but here was one she had to confess that she did not understand. Will Darrel's passionate look might mean a great deal, and it might mean nothing, and in trying to find out, she had lost her heart; but she would have suffered annihilation rather than have any one suspect the truth.

Her revery was interrupted by her brother Harry, who rushed in like a small tornado, shaking the snow from his cap, his boyish eyes shining with delight. "Oh, but won't it be glorious coasting, Kitty! The snow's about five feet deep already, and—"

"Why, Harry," said his sister, turning from the window, "how you talk; you know the snow is not more than six inches deep. Why do you exaggerate so? Don't you know that it is wicked to tell stories?"

"Oh, well, I don't care," returned the little sinner, "it's a bully snow any way; and won't I have a jolly time sliding down the hill? My new sled's done, and it's a regular beauty, all painted red and green. My, but won't the boys envy me? Bill Jones, *he's* got a new one, but 'taint nothing 'longside o' mine. Oh, yes, Kitty, here's a letter for you; I had nearly forgotten it. Will Darrel gave it to me."

The girl's heart gave a little bound as she took the missive; she felt it was the coveted invitation.

"Well, Kit, you needn't get so red about it," said the irrepressible boy, as he slammed the door and went off whistling "Captain Jinks."

As soon as her brother was gone, Kitty opened her letter. It *was* an invitation. There was to be a party at the hotel a few miles distant, and would Miss Mayo honor him by accepting a seat in his sleigh. He would call for her in the evening, so the note ran. Kitty, her heart all in a flutter of delight at the prospect of the pleasure in store for her, sat down to consider the all-important subject of dress. "I wonder if my blue merino will do; any way I will wear it;" remembering with a blush that blue was Will Darrell's favorite color.

Evening came at last, and she stood dressed and waiting for her escort. Very lovely she looked, at least Will Darrel thought so, coming in at that moment, the blue merino falling in graceful folds down *to* the shapely ankles and feet, but not below. Kitty was a sensible girl, and dispensed with the cumbersome train at country parties. She wore her hair—which was all her own—in massive braids coiled round her shapely head; two long curls, like rays of sunlight, falling over her shoulders. For ornament she wore a single white rose pinned among the braids. "Dangerously sweet," thought Will, as he wrapped her shawl about her and tied the little fur-trimmed hood, his heart beating a terrible tattoo as his fingers came in contact with the dimpled chin. As for her, never a quiver of the eyelid betrayed her, though inwardly the touch thrilled her through and through. Will, as he put her in the sleigh and tucked the robes about her, resolved to learn his fate that night. People said she was a coquette. Well, what matter, he would only be one more added to the list of her victims; he would not have it said that he lacked courage to put his fate to the test and "win or lose it all."

The road was smooth and the blooded horses seemed scarcely to touch the ground. "Oh, isn't this splendid?" said Kitty, whose sparkling eyes attested her pleasure.

"I think it is," Will answered with such emphasis that she looked up quickly to find his dark eyes fixed upon her in a look she could not mistake.

"I mean the sleighing is fine," she added, dropping her eyes with a blush.

"Well, I meant that and something more. Miss Mayo, Kitty, I must speak. I love you, and ask you to be my wife; is there any hope for me?" stooping to read her answer in the fair face and eyes so persistently drooped. What he saw there gave him courage; slipping his arm around the trim little waist, he leaned over till his jetty moustache almost touched the girl's cheek. "Tell me, Kitty, may I hope?" he whispered.

The girl's heart was beating with tumultuous joy, but her evil spirit whispered her that she must not seem too easily won. Drawing herself a little away from him she sat up prim and stately. "Mr. Darrel I cannot answer you now, this is so sudden," glancing up to see how he was taking it, and half-relenting at the look of pain in his face.

"Will you give me my answer as we go home? Suspense is harder to bear than the coldest refusal."

"Yes," she said, half-minded after all to lay her head on his broad breast and tell him how much she loved him, but that would never do after asking time to study over the matter.

"God help me if it is *No*, Kitty, I have laid my heart's best offering at your feet." Then inclining his head, he pressed a kiss on her forehead. "Forgive me this, and I will never repeat the offence, unless you give me the right to do so."

By this time they were at the hotel, and Will helped his fair companion out without another word. A gay party of revellers met them at the door, chiding them for being so late. Tom Bently, who had been an admirer of Kate ever since they had been children together, telling Darrel that he was strongly tempted to call him out then and there for depriving them so long of the pleasure of Miss Mayo's society. Will made some laughing answer, and then with the rest passed into the ball-room.

He did not dance much, and the girls wondered what had come over the elegant Will Darrel, that he seemed so quiet and preoccupied. But Kitty was unusually brilliant, danced and chatted with all her old admirers, and dispensed her smiles with lavish prodigality. Why should she not be gay, when she was so happy. Tom Bently hovered around her like a great moth around a candle; he had had his wings scorched once or twice, but true to the simile, he returned again to the flame. But the party was over at last, and the young men brought their sleighs to the door for the ladies. The girls lingered till the last minute, laughing and chatting, and kissing their good-byes, their escorts waiting patiently, or impatiently, as the case might be.

"It strikes me," said one young fellow, watching the promiscuous kissing, "that there is an unnecessary waste of sweetness." I quite agree with that young man, that the fashion among the girls of everybody kissing everybody else, is execrable, to say the least.

At last a sleigh drove up, and Kitty ran down the steps and was lifted in, the fur robes were tucked about her, and she was soon gliding over the crisp snow. They had driven some distance in silence, when Kitty ventured to look at her companion. His cap was pulled low over his brow, his furs well up around his face, so that in the dim light, she could scarcely see his features at all.

"Will," she said at last, timidly laying her hand on his arm, "are you angry with me, that you do not speak?"

The hand was instantly taken in a warm clasp.

"Kate."

"Tom Bently?" said she, too astonished to add another word.

"Yes, it's Tom Bently, Kate, who would give his birthright to be Will Darrel, and hear you speak as you did just now," returned that gentleman, half jestingly, half seriously.

"But, Tom, how in the world did I make such a mistake? I know it was dark, but I thought—"

"You thought you could tell Will Darrel *from* me. Is that it, Kitty? Forgive me, will you not? When I drove up for my sister and saw that you mistook me for Will, I thought it would be a good joke to humor the mistake; besides, I could not resist the temptation to have another ride with you, for since Darrel's advent I haven't had a chance to speak a dozen words to you. He will not grudge me this ride with you, will he, Kitty?"

"Oh, I suppose not," she answered, laughing, but at the same time her heart sank like lead in her bosom at the thought of how Will might construe the little *contretemps*. He might think that she had gone off purposely with Tom.

They were at her door, and Tom, taking her in his arms, deposited her on the step. "Well, it would be niggardly if he did, after monopolizing your society for the last three months. Good-night, Kate;" and springing into his sleigh he was soon out of sight.

"I wonder what Will thought when he found I had gone? *I'll* warrant he looked black as a thunder-cloud, but he will call to-morrow and then it will be all right," mused Kitty, as she laid her bright head upon the pillow. The morrow came, and she dressed herself in her prettiest. Will might call at any hour. "He surely will call," she said to herself, half doubtingly. But he did not, neither that day nor the next; and when a whole week had gone by and she had not seen him once in all that time, she began to lose the wild-rose bloom from her cheeks. She would not write to him—she was too proud for that; besides, she thought with a quiver of pain at the heart, maybe he was only trifling with her, after all. She had played with hearts herself, how she despised herself for it now; but bitter tears of repentance could not alter the fact nor ease the pain at her heart. Ah, no, if repentant tears could blot out our offences, who among us would be guilty?

It was the day before Christmas, and Kitty, assisted by her brother Harry, was making the old house bright with evergreens. Piles of cedar and holly were scattered about the rooms, and Harry was selecting and trimming the nicest for his sister to fashion into wreaths to decorate the pictures on the walls. They had finished the parlor and were now in the library, Harry, whose spirits were overflowing, boylike keeping up an incessant chatter. Kitty's work had fallen idly in her lap, and she sat with her hands clasped gazing into the fire, a half sad look on the usually bright face. The burden of her thoughts was, will *he* come to my party to-morrow night?

"Glory hallelugerum, Kit, if here ain't a piece of mistletoe," called out the boy, "and I'm going to put it over the fireplace." And, suiting the action to the word, he soon had a huge branch of evergreen over the wide fireplace, prominent in which was the mistletoe; standing off to view the effect—"I say, Kit, I wish I was a grown-up feller."

"What makes you wish that, Harry," said the girl, rousing herself from the brown study into which she had fallen.

"Because, if I was, what a jolly time I'd have to-morrow night kissing the girls under that there mistletoe. Bet a copper some girl is kissed under that to-morrow night."

"Nonsense, Harry," laughed his sister, hanging her last bright wreath of holly and cedar about the father of his country.

"You'll see, Miss Catherine," sententiously retorted Harry, as he marched off with an armful of the refuse.

Christmas morning dawned royally; the bells rang out a joyous chime, and all within the Mayo mansion was mirth and merriment. Great logs burned and sparkled in the huge, cavernous fireplaces, sending forth warmth and brightness. The house had been built in the olden time, when stoves and modern improvements were unknown.

There had been a dinner for all the aunts, uncles and cousins of the Mayo family, but the day was passed, and Kitty was receiving her guests in the old-fashioned parlor. She was simply clad in a soft gray silk, with lace at the throat and wrist, a spray of holly, the berries gleaming like jewels, in her wonderful bright hair. The eye turned from the gorgeously clad butterfly belles to rest with a feeling of relief on the nun-like figure that received her guests with the grace of a duchess. The room is crowded, but why does *he* not come? Ah, there he is now, she knows it by the beating of her heart; Will Darrel is before her. A little wave of color swept over her face as she timidly extended her hand, not daring to look up.

Darrel scarcely touched the little hand, said a few freezingly polite words, and passed on. As he was turning away, the girl forced herself to look up; the summit of Mont Blanc was not colder than the eyes that the last time they had been together had looked such passionate love into her own. Icy fingers seemed clutching at her heart, but pride upheld her, and no one guessed the cruel pain beneath that gray silken bodice.

Kate excelled herself that night; her brilliant wit and repartee kept a crowd about her, each and every one ready to fall down and worship if she had so commanded. "A siren that lures men to destruction," thought Will Darrel bitterly, as a low ripple of laughter reached him, inwardly cursing himself for his weakness, because her voice had power to send the life-tide in quicker currents through his veins.

She had been dancing, but was now resting by the window, listening to the gay nonsense of her partner, none other than Tom Bently, who stood fanning her.

"Kate," said Tom, catching sight of a dark, haughty face, "have you and my lord Darrel quarrelled? I can't think of anything else that would cause him to look so grand, gloomy and peculiar; and now I think of it, I don't believe he has danced with you to-night. What is it, Kate?"

"Nothing, I fancy," looking away to hide the blush that she felt was burning on her face and brow; "at least we have not quarrelled, as you say. Why should we? Besides, I have not seen Mr. Darrel before to-night for a week."

Just then a young gentleman came to claim Miss Mayo's hand for the dance, and Tom sauntered away.

"Jealous and therefore a fool," thought Tom, as he made his way through the crowd to the object of his not very complimentary reflection. "Is not our queen lovely to-night, Darrel?"

It may readily be believed that Darrel had no especial love for Tom Bently, but he was too much of a gentleman to show his resentment there. "Ah, I do not understand you," he said; "there are so many beautiful ladies here that I—"

"As if you didn't know" interrupted Tom, "but to be explicit, I mean Miss Mayo."

"Beautiful? Yes, but a heartless coquette," sneered Darrel, "fair and false."

"Why man what has come over you? Not two weeks ago you were her sworn champion, and would have broken a lance with any one that had dared to insinuate such things against Miss Mayo as you just now uttered. It can't be that you are cherishing resentment against the little girl on account of our little escapade the other night; you're a fool if you are, for there is no one to blame but myself. Miss Mayo thought it was you she was with, and did not discover her mistake till we were a mile from the hotel. How, even in the darkness, she mistook my ugly phiz for your infernally handsome one, is more than I can tell, but that she did I stand ready to swear. It's my opinion, Darrel, that you've made an ass of yourself."

Darrel's face had undergone a wonderful change during Tom's speech.

"Call me as many names as you like, Tom, old fellow," he said warmly. "I deserve them all; I have been a confounded fool; I see that, and now I am going to find Miss Mayo and tell her so, and see if she will forgive me."

Kitty, weary of the light and noise, had stolen away for a little rest to the dimly-lighted library. No one was there, so what matter if she did just for a minute lay aside the mask she had worn all the evening. She stood before the fire, a look of unutterable sadness in the misty depths of the blue eyes. The bright color had faded from her face, and in the flickering fire-light she looked like a fair pictured saint; at least, some one standing in the door-way thought so. "It is all over, my beautiful dream of happiness," the girl whispered to her heart over and over again. Two great tears trembled upon the long lashes, but ere they could fall she was drawn into a close embrace, and a passionate kiss pressed upon her lips.

"Mr. Darrel, how dare you?" she said, with flashing eyes, freeing herself from his clasp, while the red blood mounted to her forehead.

"Under the mistletoe, Kitty," Will answered, pointing above her head to the evergreens over the fireplace. A half smile broke over her face as she looked up and remembered Harry's predictions. They had amounted to prophecy in this case.

"Kitty, I have been a brute, but won't you forgive me and answer the question I asked you a week ago?" pleaded Will.

Kitty's answer was too low for other ears than Will's, but I presume it was satisfactory, as that young gentleman again took advantage of the mistletoe.

OUR EXQUISITE.

The exquisite of our town goes by the name of "Our Archie." His true name, however, is Archibald. He is the pride of the town, the joy of his doting mother, and the admiration of strangers. He is quite a public character in his way, and appears on the streets on every possible occasion, to air his fine figure and exhibit his moustache and side-whiskers. He has been fighting for over four years with these hirsute appendages; they wanted to go one way, but Archie wanted them to go another. The strain on our exquisite's constitution was awful. He became thin, pale, and careworn. Still he manfully struggled for the mastery. At last the hair, to all appearances, gave up, and consented to show its points outside the skin. Archie was overjoyed. "Triumph," thought he exultantly, and left them rush. He is at present too full of his supposed victory to notice that his side-whiskers are lopsided and pulling his head all over to one side.

"Our Archie" is one of those few great geniuses that are born before their age. He came into this world at least six months before he should have seen the light. I will explain.

He is rather a fine formed fellow. He knows it, and takes great delight in showing off the perfect symmetry of his lower limbs encased in a pair of the most fashionable pantaloons that can be procured. As he walks out on a fine afternoon, we common people gaze after him in admiration and awe. After a lapse of half a year, dating from the moment he first appeared in a certain style of pantaloons, an idea dawns upon our cloudy intellects that we can do no better than to emulate the example of "our exquisite," so we purchase that style and strut about proud of our fashionable appearance till it again dawns on us that Archibald is six months ahead of us,

That is what I meant by saying he was born before his time.

Twice happy is he who may enjoy the sunny favor of our Archie. To be permitted to have five minutes conversation with him is to attain food for thought for one month at least.

Archie is better than the common swells. He would not stoop to confine his conversation to "Aw, chawming weathaw," etc.; but raves wildly about the state of the nation and fashion and blood. His cane is the very pink of perfection. A long, slender article that was positively imported from Paris or Smith's Island, or some other fashionable foreign country. It has two fancy little tassles on the top of it.

Our exquisite is quite a lady killer, (at least he imagines he is, which amounts to about the same thing,) and as he threads the fashionable walk, he keeps his deep, black heavy eyebrows lifted to their fullest extent, and gazes with satisfaction at himself in every store window, and expectantly at every lady he meets.

Why, oh, why! are not gracefulness and ease granted equally to all? Often have I practiced before the glass in the secresy of my own room to obtain the gracefulness of Archie's manner of taking leave of young ladies. I threw my left foot a little in front of my right as Archibald does, I stiffened my legs as he always does. I placed my left hand on the left side of my vest all right. I bowed my body forward till it was at right angles with my legs, as I had always seen him do. I placed my right hand to my lips, and slowly drew it away, and describing an arc blew a kiss at the glass. But in vain. I was painfully conscious that there was something wanting, and I came to the conclusion that exquisites are like poets and French writers, "born not made."

Who is there that can lean in such a *distingué* manner and with such graceful *abandon* on a piano, and wear such a vacant countenance whilst a lady discourses sweet or execrable music, as our exquisite? Echo answers sadly—No one.

Archie is in business now. It was some time before he found one congenial to his tastes. When he first started out in life he formed the noble resolution of being a literary character, and he determined to commence at the bottom round of the ladder and climb to the top. But he was going to do it in a genteel manner, and with his kid gloves on. He entered a large book firm with these noble resolutions. His employers desired him to be an errand boy. (The idea!) His noble spirit revolted at the idea of such menial employment, and he put on his gloves and sought another profession. Now he has found the concentrated essence of a perfect business. He delivers rolls of music for young ladies who have purchased from the store he is in. W. E. M.

☞ The Hindoo widow goes for her husband's funeral pile. The American woman goes for her husband's "pile" without waiting for a funeral.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Not amiss—a rich, handsome widow.

☞ Harmless pugilism—Striking attitudes.

☞ "I see through it," as the washerwoman said when the bottom of the tub fell out.

☞ A St. Louis New Year's caller, dressed in the grandest shape, made his rounds astride a patient ox.

☞ The Terra Haute Gazette man was once third cook on a canal boat. The boys in the office says it's fun to suddenly yell "low bridge," and see him dive frantically under his desk.—*Exchange.*

☞ An energetic divorce lawyer of Chicago has completed an arrangement with the county clerk to have his professional card printed on the backs of marriage licenses.

☞ Fifteen lies to the square inch represents the editorial power of a Kansas City newspaper, if its rival is to be believed.

☞ China has a new imperial flag, of triangular shape, the bunting of deep yellow, and a blue devil eating boiled lobster in the centre.

☞ Beethoven's autographs have been reduced to ten cents each by a Titusville man, who furnishes 'em fresh at that price. He is practising, and will soon be able to furnish original letters written by the Father of this distracted country for a mere trifle.

☞ The popular morning costume in Macon is simply an overcoat and a corn-plaster.

☞ Mrs. Smith (to Mr. S. who has just arrived home at 2.30 A. M.)—What do you mean, sir, by coming home in such a state at this untimely hour? Mr. Smith (decidedly fresh?)—S-s-s-sh-shtate eh? (After a pause, with intense dignity.) Forshimate for you, ma-ram, frien' took me to Mr. Tyndall's lecture, (hic) an' if we hadn't come out 'fore last act, shouldn' a' been home for very conshi'rable. (hic!)

☞ A lovely Des Moines girl arises at four o'clock every Monday morning and does the family washing, then prepares the frugal meal of pancakes and coffee for all hands, whom she arouses with a hot poker. She is as lively as she is beautiful.

☞ It is said that the Mormons have three powder-mills. With so many wives and mothers-in-law to blow them up, we can't see what the dickens they want with powder-mills.—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

☞ When a Kansas City girl, who was clerk in a candy store, learned that she had fallen heir to $100,000 in England, she refused to attend customers, and perched herself on the counter and chewed gum drops the rest of the day.

☞ A Danbury man, whose wife kindles the fires and gets the room warm enough for him to move around comfortably without putting on his nether garments, sat down Sunday morning on a chair which was already occupied by a scalding-hot lid-holder. He has had a new plaster put on himself, and some on the ceiling just above the chair, and now kindles the fire himself.

☞ The inhabitants of Cincinnati are putting large quantities of extra stuffing in their hats, and on the more exposed portions of their bodies. The city police were supplied with new clubs Saturday.

☞ Over seven thousand kangaroo hides have been worked up into fine boots for the young men of San Francisco. They are said to excel the patent leathers as a dress boot for hops.

☞ An ingenious gentleman of Keokuk undertook to smoke out the rats from beneath the floors and partitions of his house. He made it very hot for the rats, but burned his house down. This kind of rat exterminator is effective, but cats are.

☞ Splendid ice and bright moonlight have been the good fortune of skaters in the past week. It was pleasant to see troops of young people hurrying to the ponds, and to think of the thoughtful mothers at home spreading nice home-made plasters for the back of their heads.—*Danbury News.*

☞ A cow in Cincinnati upset a milk-can at the depot, and becoming frightened at the contents of the can, ran into a telegraph pole and broke one of her horns off. She had never seen such looking fluid before, and it gave her the blues.

☞ London underwriters refused to insure a vessel because it was named "The Devil."

☞ The fashionable equipage in Spain this season is a team of four or six white donkeys.

☞ "Cotton-Eyed Joe" is the name of a gentleman lately elected to represent Kansas City in the penitentiary.

☞ A New England paper says:—"One of our residents about to go West desires to sell a sitting in one of the most eligible groceries in town. The stove is the most powerful in market, and the cracker and sugar barrels are within easy distance."

☞ A nervous youth in Louisville, after his marriage ceremony, slipped a nickel five cent piece into the parson's hand, instead of a five dollar gold piece, which he had ready in another pocket.

☞ Zeb Crummet wonders why poor people are never afflicted with kleptomania. We call it stealing, then.

☞ Upon the marriage of Miss Wheat, of Virginia, an editor hopes that her path may be flowery, and that she may never be threshed by her husband.

☞ Every first class brass band should know at least two tunes.

☞ The strangest case of absence of mind that we ever heard of was that of a monkey out in Paducah, which used to sit out on the fence in a revery, and try to pick its teeth with the end of its tail.

☞ Mr O'Clarence, of North street, took a sudden notion to dash through the snow, Friday, and at the first jump from the walk stepped with one foot on top of a hydrant and broke his knee-pan with his chin. He has drawn up a petition to have hydrants built thirteen feet high, with an alarm bell on top.—*Danbury News.*

☞ Mrs. Livermore informs us that the feet of the coming woman are on the mountain top, and that her spirit is of the mountain air. This is very nice; but if the coming woman is to be of any practical value she had better come down from there.

☞ A saloon in Dubuque contains the following, printed on card-board, encased in an elaborately gilt frame, and hung behind the bar: "Bosetevely No-trust."

☞ A lady in Bedford, England, asseverates that she has cured many persons afflicted with chills by administering to them "spiders made into pills with flour and water."

☞ A man named Wright was shot for breach of promise, on Monday last, at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, by a young woman who thought Wright was wrong.

☞ The police of New York have to crack a man's skull before knowing whether he is a gentleman or burglar. They tell by the sound of the whack.

☞ A Chinaman, who had become snow-blind while working on the Central Pacific Railway, applied at a San Francisco police-station on the 31 instant for official permission to have himself shot.

☞ A young gentleman visiting a house on Park street pulled out his watch, and after looking at it very attentively quietly dropped it into the punch-bowl, and then took a fried oyster and put it in his pocket.

☞ "Charles," said a young lady to her lover, "there is nothing interesting in the paper to-day, is there dear?" "No, love, but I hope there will be one day, when we both shall be inserted." The lady blushed, and said, of course, "For shame, Charles."

☞ It is said that more than one thousand American girls are at school in England.

☞ A magazine devoted to the interests of opium-eaters is published in Indiana.

EDWIN FORREST AND THE WILD CAT.

Mr. C. G. Rosenberg, formerly the "literary agent" of Edwin Forrest, supplies the following to Appleton's Journal:

"When I was quite a young man," said Mr. Forrest, "and just beginning to make my way as an actor, I was down at Mobile. I had, let me tell you, quite enough to do. I was the 'leading man,' and sometimes had to cram with half a dozen parts a week. However, I liked work then. The way I used to study, was to take a long walk before rehearsal, and read the part through again and again, until I'd learned it. Well, about four miles beyond the city—Mobile wasn't then as large as it is now, nor as cultivated and peopled round its outskirts—was a fine sweep of green and flat ground, continuing for some three-quarters of a mile, and then broken up by a thick belt of palm-trees and undergrowth. This meadow, as it would be called here, was a favorite studying-place of mine. One morning I'd gone out there with a tolerably long part—'Octoroon,' in *The Mountaineers*—and, with my head bent over the book—it was a printed copy of the play—was hard at work. What made me look I don't know; but I did. Just coming out of the clump of palms I saw, what I at first fancied was a large dog. Its three or four first bounds toward me, however, convinced me I was mistaken. It was a big wildcat, or a puma, or something of the sort; and when I realized what the thing was, I began to shake with something that, if not fear, was remarkably like it. I had no weapon with me—I never carried one. Even my penknife was left on my writing-table, for I felt in my pocket for it. Then, for a moment, I thought of running away. What use would my legs have been against the animal's in a race for life? Every instant the brute was coming nearer. I remained motionless, my eyes fixed in a horrid sort of fascination on the tiger-cat, while I calculated what sort of chance would be mine in the coming struggle—mine for existence, its for a breakfast. All at once, about twenty yards from me, the thing crouched, its eyes glaring into mine, and its tail slowly wagging to and fro in a very playful and interesting manner. What did this pause mean? All at once I remembered having read somewhere of the effect of the fixed glance of the human eye on the infuriated brute creation. Had mine magnetized it? Not at all. Rising, it made two more bounds forward, and then crouched as before, right opposite me, its tail still wagging. I could scarcely keep my eyes from following its motion. However, I fastened the brute's gastronomical inspection of my carcass with an unwavering glance. Then it turned its head on one side and then on the other. If I only had a pistol with me! I had not, so I waited, as the infernal puma did—possibly, so it then seemed to me, some three or four hours—probably some ten minutes. At last it rose again, slowly and earnestly contemplated me, and then, either appalled by my eyes, or taking me for a carved image, as I had not stirred, and not relishing a meal of wood or stone, it paced slowly away. I was about making tracks in the opposite direction from it, when—it was lucky I had not done so—about forty or fifty paces from me, it sprung round and once more crouched. There it lay again upon the grass, its tail lashing backward and forward, and its head rocking from side to side, as if it wished to verify its ideas touching my not being a creature of flesh and blood. How long this continued I was only enabled to guess afterward. But it did come to an end. Slowly it again rose, and, allowing its tail to drop between its hind-legs, ran—gentlemen, it ran!—away in the most sneakingly cowed manner possible. And so did I; not, however, until it had completely vanished in the palm and brush belt at the far end of the meadow. The four miles—this is mentioned to demonstrate my speed—between the spot upon which I had been standing and Mobile, were covered in less than half an hour."

"And how large, may I ask, Mr. Forrest," inquired one of his auditory on this occasion, "was the puma?"

"I didn't measure it, sir."

"Of course. But how large should you suppose it to have been?"

"Thirty-five feet from its snout to the tip of its tail, if I reckon its inches by the scare it gave me!" exclaimed Forrest, with a humorous twinkle in his eye. "Not half an inch less."

There arose, of course, a genuine Homeric burst of laughter at this reply.

FISK'S MURDER.

Stokes Tells His Story.

Stokes, the alleged murderer of James Fisk, Jr., related the following to a reporter:—"As God shall judge me, I did not expect to meet James Fisk that Saturday afternoon: I had no idea of coming across him at all that day; I had not seen him before for some time, and I had heard that he was still sick of the small-pox. I was at the Grand Central Hotel with some friends looking for other friends, and I was rambling to and fro about the hotel when I met him accidentally—by the merest accident, so help me my God." (This last sentence very solemnly.) "I had been very seldom to the Grand Central Hotel; only three times before in my life, I believe, and only once before in the second story; so that I knew nothing about the interior of the hotel at all. While rambling around I met James Fisk, and he met me; we met face to face, and the moment he saw me he put his hand in his pocket. He had his pistol ready. I saw it just as plain as I see that seal-skin cap of yours on your knees there. More plainly, for the light was much brighter and clearer than it is here. I raised my pistol; he fired and I fired, and I knew no more, so great was my excitement, until they brought me into the presence of Mr. Fisk. Even then I did not know that he was wounded. He seemed calm enough, and was half sitting on a sofa. He never said I shot him or killed him, or anything of the kind. He merely said to the officer who asked him if he recognized me, 'Yes, I know the man; it is Mr. Stokes.' Nothing more. He even looked at me somewhat in his old fashion, I think—sadly, yet not angrily, almost tenderly. I felt almost like making friends with him then, but he waved his hand, and they took me away; and I never knew anything about that wound in the abdomen they talked so much about until the next day. I thought all the time I had only wounded him slightly, that it was all a small matter, and I wanted to get on bail at once. I had not the slightest idea of killing James Fisk, and no man was more sorry to hear of his death, for with all his faults Jim had good stuff in him, and no man knew it better than I, for I knew both sides of him. But he was armed that afternoon, and I shall prove it this time; and shall prove what was done with the pistol; prove it to the satisfaction of the world this time."

But it appears from the result of the trial, that Stokes was not able to prove this story to the satisfaction of the jury.

MRS. MARY D. GIBBONS, of Quincy, Mass., a lady seventy years old, has used a Grover & Baker Machine for the last twelve years. Her daughter, who uses a Wilcox & Gibbs' Machine, after every week's wash, brings her work to be repaired on the Grover & Baker.

IF YOU FEEL dull, despondent, drowsy, debilitated, have frequent headache, mouth tastes badly, poor appetite, and tongue coated; you are suffering from torpid liver or "Biliousness." Nothing will cure you so speedily and permanently as Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. 606

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Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, headache, constipation, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, bilious fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Warranted to effect a positive cure.

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A CARD.

To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a recipe that will cure you, *free of charge*. This noble remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D., New York City. oct18-1y

PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its Stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

It will continue to publish Serials, Short Stories, Poetry, &c., from its old list of talented contributors. Among the Serials we may announce:—

THE MASTER OF GREYLANDS.
By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Andinalan's Trial," etc.

UNA AND HER PRINCE.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

A GIRL'S ROMANCE.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquette," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Raeburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

FASHIONS, FANCY WORK, ETC.

Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and elegant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

SPLENDID PREMIUMS

Sewing Machines, Plated Ware, Gold Chains, &c.

Those desiring to get up Lists of subscribers to the Lady's Friend, will be well compensated. The list of Premiums is the same as for the Post.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sheep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, under *special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

TERMS—With the Chromo—Always in Advance.

One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
One copy of the Lady's Friend, one of "The Saturday Evening Post," and one Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	5.00
Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	8.00
Eight copies of The Lady's Friend, and eight Chromos, (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club),	16.00
Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $6.00. Eight copies (and one gratis to the sender of the Club) for $12.00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the sender of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

One copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) and one of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) for $4.50.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.—Any one entitled a Chromo, may take in its place, if he so desires, a copy of either of our handsome Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit twelve cents extra, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order.*

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded *in all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 25, 1873.

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RATES:

Single copy, $2.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($2.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($2.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST (with the CHROMO, or one of our STEEL ENGRAVINGS,) and a copy of "PEMBERTON; OR, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO" (postage paid), for $4.50.

One copy of PEMBERTON (postage paid) $1.75.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, or to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $2.00 each.

Any club-subscriber wishing the Chromo or an Engraving must remit *one dollar extra*.

The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to The Lady's Friend can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

WE WILL SEND YOU ANY NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE YOU WISH, IN CONNECTION WITH THE POST, AT A REDUCED PRICE—as follows: Any Paper or Magazine the regular price of which is $1.00 at 87 cts.; regular price $2.00 at $1.75; regular price $2.00 at $2.25; regular price $3.00 at $2.62; regular price $4.00 at $3.50; regular price $5.00 at $4.38.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

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☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

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SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

"PEMBERTON."—This work has just been issued by *J. B. Lippincott & Co.*, of this city. We forwarded copies last week to all entitled to them. It makes, we think, (so far as outward appearance is concerned) a decidedly handsome volume—the type being new, and the paper, printing and binding excellent. It can be seen at any bookseller's. The Frontispiece is a fine engraving of the Arbor scene between Helen and Washington, designed by Bensell, and engraved by Sharp.

OUR PREMIUMS.

Mr. M. T. A., of Wartburg, Tenn., writes:

"Many thanks for 'Little Samuel.' It is indeed a beautiful picture, and is worth more than the subscription price."

Mrs. R. M. C., of McLeansboro, Ill., says

"The Chromos were received, and greatly admired by every one. I think 'Little Samuel' the most beautiful picture I have ever seen offered as a premium. I would not part with mine under any consideration."

Mrs. J. M., of Spring Creek, Nebraska, says:

"'Little Samuel' is all that it is represented to be."

Mrs. M. A. A., of Spencer, Ohio, writes:

"Your beautiful Chromo is one of Heaven's silent messengers, which, while it charms the sight, appeals to the holiest emotions of the heart."

Mrs. M. E. P., of Clay, N. Y., in sending on a club for the THE POST, writes as follows:

"We have been delighted with THE POST, the past year; it has fairly outdone itself. We take seven papers, beside THE POST, and I think I could spare them all better than I could that. I have taken it since I was a young girl, and now, though I have grown-up children, I must confess to you, that every Wednesday, for a short hour, I am wafted back to girlhood. It never fails to bring me a delightful sensation of renewed youth; and when it fails to come on that day, as it does about three times a year, it is sure to be a day of misfortune for all of us. The grandsire is slightly cross; something *necessary* has fallen out of mother's life (that is me,) and she is down; the children are out of sorts, and we don't recover until the next day brings THE POST. Wishing you the highest success during the coming year, I am truly your faithful friend."

DR. LORD'S LECTURES.—We omitted last week to call the attention of our city readers to the Lectures on History of the Rev. Dr. Lord, at Horticultural Hall. They are given on every Tuesday and Friday morning at 12 o'clock, and are attended, we understand, by a very excellent audience—both as regards numbers and quality. Such lectures are very improving, and we are therefore glad to hear that they receive due encouragement.

☞ One of the hill towns in Western Massachusetts once upon a time selected a minister as chairman of its school committee. The following was the opening paragraph of the reverend gentleman's statistical report:—"Too the onerable bord of edication greting—The general school comity of the town of —— arfter a exostive and judicial examination on the morral and phisical kondition of deatrik schools finds it thair dooty to report as follers."

☞ With a tin can, some old wire and a few bits of board a Louisville boy constructed a miniature steam engine perfect in all its parts. It finally blew up and neutralized the baby, just like a full-grown machine.

A BABY'S THOUGHTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Little wee darling with rose-bud face,
What are you thinking about, I pray?
It must be your thoughts have a pleasant grace,
For they make you smile in a strange, sweet way

What do you see, oh baby wise?
Tell me, I pray, for I long to know;
There's a far-away look in your pansy eyes;
Do they see how the pansies bud and blow?

Ah, wee baby, your thoughts are your own;
We may not know them, strange and sweet,
Out of such thoughts our thoughts have grown,
Harder and grimmer with life's fierce heat.

Stay always the baby you are to-day,
Sweet as a flower, the world unknown;
For such pure, white thoughts you will vainly pray
When to a man's estate you've grown.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A NEW YORK ASYLUM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Were you ever in an Asylum for Drunkards? a place where they put the drunkards all together in a house by themselves, and cure, or try to cure them of their bad ways? If you were never in one, perhaps you would be interested to know something about how one looks, and how they act in there. That exceedingly uncomfortable snow-journey, which I told you about last week, was made for the purpose of visiting the New York State Inebriate Asylum at Binghamton. At the hotel in the morning they asked me if I would have a carriage to take me to the asylum, three miles away. I said yes. When the carriage came for me, it was a sleigh, and I noticed after that, that whenever a person said anything about a carriage, he always meant a sleigh. Everything and everybody travelled by sleigh, even to the milkman with his tin cans. I never saw so many sleighs in my life as in those three days. My carriage, which was a sleigh, was shut up so tight that I couldn't have seen a square inch of space outside of it if I had broken my neck for it. At length my carriage, which was a sleigh shut up as tight as a black wagon carrying a load of "vags" to the city workhouse, stopped and let your correspondent see the blessed light of day directly in front of a large, lofty, and beautiful gray limestone building, which looked like a castle on the Rhine, or a lunatic asylum, or perhaps a young ladies' seminary on a very large scale. It was *it*, and we were there.

Twenty or thirty gentlemen, young, old, big and little, stood about as we entered the wide hall, and immediately some of them set up the cry of "Fresh fish." Straightway the cry, "Fresh fish!" "Fresh fish!" "Fresh fish!" was caught up all along the halls, and echoed from one end of the big building to the other. I hadn't an idea what it meant then, any more than the man in the moon, but later I was instructed in the cabalistic meaning of this queer cry. Whenever a new-comer arrives at the Binghamton Asylum he is called a "fresh fish;" if, however, an unfortunate inebriate relapses and is sent back to the asylum a second, or maybe a third time, he is not a fresh fish, but a "repeater." There are actually men at the asylum who are back there for the third, or even fourth time. I don't think there is much hope for such inebriates as that.

The officers as well as nearly all the patients at Binghampton are exceedingly intelligent, courteous gentleman, and made my visit there most pleasant and profitable. If a drunkard could be drawn away from temptation, and his feet planted firmly in the right way again, anywhere in the world, it would be in this place at Binghamton. Some friends took me through the building, from the furnaces and steam boilers down in the extreme lower regions, up to the look-out towers on top. We went all through the chapel, the pretty little theatre, the club-rooms and library. That inebriate asylum library set one to musing upon human generosity. It has been "donated" to the asylum, that library has. It is valuable and entertaining, it is. Did it ever occur to you to notice the kind of books folks "donate" to asylums and things? If anybody has a dusty pile of old Patent Office reports, which aren't worth house room, or a musty bundle of antediluvian public documents of any sort, old school-books or dog-eared Sunday-school books which we need before we got our new library, or worthless old professional doctor books a hundred years behind the time, and not a book in the whole pack of rubbish of the least value to man, beast, or Old Nick, the owner of the precious pile is straightway seized with an incurable fit of generosity, and he "donates" it all to an asylum. Blessed charity, which droppeth like the gentle dew from Heaven.

Once I had an opportunity, among the other queer places I've been in in my life, of penetrating behind the vail which separates from the outer world the mysteries and miseries of a lunatic asylum. Once in there, and behind the scenes, I was beyond measure surprised to recognize at that lunatic asylum some of the most wealthy and fashionable persons of my acquaintance. And exactly the same thing happened at this Inebriate Asylum. Families whom I knew to occupy the very first and highest position in the social world, were represented among the unfortunate men who were sent here for being drunkards. Verily half the world doesn't know what the other half is up to. Probably if some of those rich and highly-favored men had been born poor souls, they would now be industrious, temperate men. Indeed, some of them appear to have become drunkards through sheer trying to kill time, and made drunkards out of themselves because they had nothing else to do. Pity they couldn't have been newspaper correspondents, or street-car drivers, or had some such useful and steady occupation.

To amuse themselves, the more literary of the inebriates have established a famous club, which they have named the "Oilapod Club. They have real pleasant club-rooms, where they play chess and cards, read, sing and smoke—*Himmel!* how they do smoke! I wonder how a man can take so much pleasure in filling himself up brimful of nasty tobacco smoke?

The officers of the Asylum have a hobby—and who in this world has not a hobby of some sort—that drunkenness is not a crime, but a disease to be cured. It is mostly a disease of the mind, they say, and ought not to be regarded as any more of a disgrace than insanity. Perhaps they are right. At any rate I've no doubt we ought to look upon it in the light of a disease to be doctored, but somehow human nature has a feeling in its bones that a man who lies in the gutter with his clothes spattered with mud and his hat mashed, is disgraceful as well sick. However, maybe that's the fault of our education. At any rate, let us all hope and pray with our whole hearts that the good doctors may succeed in permanently curing this frightful disease. I haven't much faith in a reformed drunkard. I haven't much faith in anything, to tell the truth. That is, there are a few things that I have faith in to the death, but a reformed drunkard isn't one of them to any great extent. But they told me at Binghamton that more than a fourth of the poor, broken-down unfortunates who come to them, go away surely and certainly cured. That many men now holding most responsible places of honor and trust, are men whom the Inebriate Asylum has saved from a horrible drunkard's death. Of course there are men destitute of all will or conscience, whom nothing short of being shut up for life within four solid stone stone walls, with no way to dig out, will ever stop from drinking. An Inebriate Asylum can do nothing for such as these. But there are men among whom it can and does do a great and good work. There are stories connected with the inmates of this asylum, which are of thrilling interest. A few of them are as sad as anything I ever heard. Many persons who come to Binghamton are highly-gifted men, of keen, bright spirit and tender conscience. Some of these, and more than one or twos have gone out into the world again, full of high hopes and brave resolves, and in a sorrowful moment have fallen before the tempting demon of alcohol. Their shame and remorseful agony has been so great on recovering from their fit of intoxication, that life was no longer endurable, and several, the most rarely gifted and cultured of them all, have committed suicide. Poor souls! Maybe in that world into which they hurried their doomed lives so fearfully, it will be granted them to begin over again. Pray Heaven it may be so!

One thing seemed curious to me. Among the statistics of drunkards I find it is not the steady soakers, who drink regularly every day, that are the most difficult to cure. On the contrary, it is what are called periodical drinkers, those who remain sober for weeks and months, without tasting a drop of liquor, and then suddenly go off on fearful drinking bouts, and drink like maniacs for nearly as long a time as they have been sober, till there is scarcely a vestige of humanity left in them. Then as suddenly they stop drinking again, to repeat the process over. This class, they say, is the most hopeless class of inebriates. Why it should be so I cannot tell. It certainly seems to me that it would be the steady drinkers who are hardest to cure.

I had heard some rather tough stories before I went to Binghamton, about how inebriates were punished, when, as sometimes happened, they broke through all restraint, and ran away and got liquor, and consequently came home furiously drunk. People had told me that in such cases the inebriates were knocked down, chained hand and foot, thrust into cells, and fed upon bread and water, or nothing, as the case might be. It is strange what lies people will tell in this world. Nothing of the sort mentioned is done at Binghamton. When an unruly inebriate does run away, and return to the Asylum in such a state that he would be dangerous to himself, his comrades, or the furniture, he is simply put away for safe-keeping until he becomes sober; that is, he is locked in an empty strong room, oak-lined, with grating over the window, and furnished only with a mattress, bed-covering and pillow. The only punishment which is inflicted on him is simply the disgrace which attaches to him, and being deprived the privilege of going outside the Asylum grounds for a stated period.

A newspaper is published in the Asylum, devoted to the interests of temperance. It is a valuable paper for reference, and a labor of love besides. One gentleman sets all the type, writes all the editorials, and does all the scissoring too. But he is greatly overworked, and needs help sadly in the type-setting department. He says that if any unfortunate inebriate printer in the United States wishes seriously to reform his evil ways, here's the place for him. Such a printer could earn enough to pay for his living and a little besides. The editor of the paper tells me that he has written to a number of places to find a printer who would come on those terms, but has been wholly unsuccessful, thus far. And he remarked rather dryly that he thought the printers must have all reformed since he used to know 'em.

SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Fill up your cups, drink down your wine,
To this which now I give,
The love of youth, the love divine,
Here's something why to live:
These maids so bright,
These eyes that light,
Here's something why to live!

What care we for the world's great work?
For wealth which finds men old?
Fair lady's lips we never shirk,
Sweet hair that does enfold:
These yellow locks,
This heart that rocks,
Ay, they're worth all your gold!

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY OLIVE KING.

DEAR POST.—It seems to me all your contributors have gone stark staring husband crazy. What is the matter with them all? They haven't written a word on any other subject in a month, and I do wish they would flax around and hunt up somebody, if it is possible, who will stand in that tender relation to them, and then, perhaps, they will keep still awhile. I don't believe one of them knows what it is to be married. I wish they did, for then, maybe, they wouldn't say so much about their conjugal relations and domestic arrangements.

One contributor is incensed because all women don't lean against a bed-post instead of a man; and another is angry because everybody can't see that a man is an improvement on a bed-post. I never leaned much myself, never had time, but it seems to me a bed-post would be better to lean against than some men, and a man would be better to lean against than some bed-posts—some of those old-fashioned sharp-cornered ones, for instance.

"But whichever way they like it" is my motto, for I am opposed to "rows," and when ladies begin to talk about "putting a head" on somebody, I get frightened, and clasping my hands say in the language of the Chief Executive, "Let us have peace." I'm perfectly willing, if it will save trouble, to let Roberta lean against a man, and Zig lean against a bed-post, provided that when they both get tired of leaning they shall meet privately over in Hoboken, or somewhere, and compare notes, and decide between themselves which has had the best time. Any how let them have it all to themselves, I say, and not be flinging their men and their bed-posts in the faces of honest people who read THE POST for its charming sketches, and stories, and letters and things. "Amen! to that sweet prayer," methinks I hear somebody add.

AS TO FASHIONS,

I really think it is high time I said something on that head; and to begin, I will say that the hair importers in this city, and all those who have dealt in braids and curls and chignons and frizzes are beginning to look sick. I suppose they thought this carnival of hair was to last always, and made no calculation for a day in which Nature might rise superior to their puffs and pads. But so it is. The decree has gone forth, and although false tresses are still worn to some extent, it is the height of fashion to appear with just what hair belongs to you, and to arrange that in the closest, flattest, most unpretending style possible. You can cut off a sparse quantity about the forehead, and make some crazy-looking frizzes, but the rest must be drawn back so tight you can't shut your eyes, and wound round and round the top of the head—always provided there is enough of it to wind round and round. Generally speaking, there isn't, but that don't matter—it is the fashion not to have much of any hair; so, if it is only fixed up in the prevailing mode, it is "stylish and real becoming." At least, that is what everybody says. For my own part, I think it is dreadfully trying to most faces. There are a few faces that nothing can spoil, not even the small-pox or a premature gunpowder blast, and such look just as well with their hair arranged in the new style as they do with it any other. But there is an old saying that "one can get used to anything," and I dare say there is a great deal of truth in it; and whether ladies ever do look quite as fascinating in their own locks as they did in borrowed ones, or not, there will be a great gain in point of expense and trouble, and I'm not sure there will not be a decrease in those "distressing headaches," of which everything in the shape of woman has suffered for the last ten years.

BONNETS

are a swindle, and milliners a humbug; at least, my particular milliner is. She has deluded me with false hopes for a whole year. As long ago as last spring she said the summer hats would be "lovely," but you know they were "nothing of the kind, Mrs. Doolittle." And when I expostulated and said I looked like a fright, and wouldn't be seen going to my own funeral with such a thing on my head, she solemnly assured me that her agent in "Paris" had just shipped some pattern bonnets entirely different from anything ever seen in this country, and that all her Fall hats would be copied from them, and they would be "lovely." Again I waited and the Fall hats were even uglier than the summer ones, and I made bold to express myself to that effect, when in a seductively sweet and touching manner she informed me that they were keeping back all their novelties for New Year's. Just as though a milliner would keep a "novelty" or anything else back, that she had a chance to sell. I suppose if I were to go there now she would be keeping the "very latest" for St. Patrick's day.

The truth of the matter is, there are no new styles in bonnets. They are all a stiff high-crowned conglomeration of a little lace and a good deal of ribbon, some flowers, a jet butterfly and a coronet front; the whole set up as high as possible on the top of the head and held there by ribbon strings tied under the back hair. Sounds as though it might look real pretty, but it don't.

ROUND HATS,

as a rule, are rather more becoming than bonnets. In fact, I think the shapes this winter are a trifle prettier than last. Of course there is the usual amount of innuendo hurled at the mothers and grandmothers, because they will wear them—but what can the poor old things do? That's a conundrum I should like somebody to guess. They can't wear those horrid, awful bonnets, and they can't go bareheaded—or at least they don't want to until the weather moderates. So I ask again, what are they going to do? It seems to me if some of these growlers who have so much to say about "wolves in sheep's clothing"—no, that isn't it—"old ewes fixed up lamb fashion," that was what I was trying to quote, would just "simmer down" on that, and go to work and invent a sensible and becoming bonnet for elderly and middle-aged ladies, they would be doing a great deal more good, and their chances of a front seat in the Hereafter would be much better.

LONG SKIRTS

are the fashion for street wear, particularly during the January thaw. They salt the streets here—I don't know whether it is for the benefit of the ladies' dresses or the horses' feet—but from all I can hear and see, I should judge it was a sort of partnership business, and I don't know which likes it the worst, the ladies or the horses. The ladies, *say* a great deal, and I presume the horses keep up a severe thinking, but they both travel through it just the same.

The shoemakers are in ecstacies over the new style of train dresses—they know perfectly well that on a sloppy day the ladies will make an attempt to hold them up on the crossings—hold them up on *one* side,—and as, in an impromptu grab, it is a difficult thing to gauge it just right—there is always danger of lifting the skirt a little higher than is absolutely necessary, and in such cases a neat, new, well-fitting boot is a very desirable thing to exhibit, looks ever so much better than a loose, ill-fitting one, all stretched out, and half the buttons off. I don't suppose I should ever have thought of it, or observed it myself, but a shoe-dealer posted me, and I've no doubt but it is so; it looks reasonable enough for all I can see. "So you will observe that "what is one man's poison is another man's meat"—(that was n't what I meant to say. However, let it pass, so long as it is down.) The shoe-dealers say that these long skirts have given an "unprecedented impetus" to their business. I don't know what an "unprecedented impetus" is, but I'm glad the long dresses have given something to—something.

FASHIONS IN SHOES

do not change with startling rapidity, though now that the business has received that "unprecedented impetus," perhaps we shall have something new. I notice that laced shoes are becoming almost as popular as buttoned ones. Individually, I like them, but until lately I could never get anybody to approve my taste. There was "no *dress* about them," everybody said; and so to please my friends I bought buttoned boots, and then went to work amusing myself breaking the buttons off and sewing them on every time I was in a hurry, until the boots were worn out. Of course, in laced boots the strings sometimes break, but you can tie them together and conceal the knot, and then save up your money until you get two cents, and buy a new pair of laces, and have them ready against the old ones break again. It is a great deal handier than to have to hunt all over the house after a needle and thread every time you pull a button off.

CONTENTED PEOPLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.
BY GLEN CAROL.

Why cannot we be satisfied with what we have and are, and with the things that are, that must be, and will be, despite our *fret*-tings and puny rages?

How very easy to ask this question, how very difficult to answer let those tell who have walked steadily on, with empty hearts and hands, down life's great boulevard, or crept silently and shudderingly through its choked lanes and haunted by-ways. Existed there ever the mortal who could truthfully aver—"I am contented to the uttermost—wholly satisfied with myself, and all around me. I ask, I crave nothing more!" If the aforesaid mortal ever did or does exist, he is surely blest of the gods, or, acursed of them, he lives an insensate clod! There are some of this world's would-be well-doers who are forever dinning into weary ears the doctrine of contentment, under any and all circumstances. They preach to us of our duty in this wise, until at last we rebel, become utter apostates, and openly avow our intention to remain so. Human nature is woefully unstable and weak at best, and we learn by experience that "'Tis the last feather that breaks the camel's back." I don't think, that, as a general rule, I envy contented people. Examine closely into the lives of these contented beings, and you will find that they are in this state or condition simply because they have not brains enough to rise above it. Their aspirations are limited, ambition is stunted, and the mind dwarfed and misshapen aims to become nothing higher or nobler than it is. To-day is their world, and they look not beyond it for the to-morrow.

Stolid and indifferent, oblivious even to the pain of pleasure—there *is* such a thing! plodding blindly along, missing all that makes life beautiful, who would change places with those whose content is unvarying?

Better be subject to the inevitable heart-aches, few or many, than be the possessor of a heart so dull and dead that it cannot ache at all.

A WINTER NIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY PHILA H. CASE LA BARRE.

How drearily the bleak winds moan
That all night wander to and fro—
Tossing about the ghastly wraiths
Of wildly drifting winter snow.

No slumber comes with drowsy balm
To veil my eyes grown dim with tears,
Sad eyes! grief drowned their laughing light,
And shadowed them with years and years—

And left a withering blight and gloom
That in my spirit long hath lain—
And thro' the dreary, endless days
My heart must bear its bitter pain.

For no new coming morn or night
Will bring a message, love, from thee,
Or any hope that e'er again—
Thou wilt come back, beloved, to me.

I shiver with a vague unrest,
I sicken with a nameless dread!
For oh, this fearful, driving storm
Is beating on thy darling head.

And this wild, weary, wailing wind
Has wandered o'er thy lonely grave,
And all night long the cold, cold snow
Its ghostly banners o'er thee wave.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

THE ETHICS OF ECONOMY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

"Ah!" exclaims Mrs. Allright, "what does that mean? I know enough about economy, but that other word attached to it is rather a puzzler. Now I wonder if she can tell me anything about economy; ever since I was a school teacher in Maine, and boarded round with the farmers' families, I have thought I had learned through the alphabet of economy. Hateful word! I wish I never need hear it! Mr. Allright preaches it, but never practices it; the newspapers are full of it; but I sometimes think no one knows much about it."

That's true, my friend, I think that few of us who talk so much about it, yet practice it so little, understand its true signification.

As for the puzzling word "ethics," if you will consult your "Webster" or "Worcester," you will find that it means a system of moral principles; or a system of rules for regulating the actions and manners of men in society and in households.

Now we will have a chat upon the moral principles of economy.

Perhaps your idea of economy consists in careful expenditure, an avoidance of waste, frugality, etc., etc.

"We must be economical exclaims the father of the family, and so retrenchment is the order of the day, and if a few dollars are saved in fuel, lights, the table and other household expenses, the change is regarded as a decided success.

There is a certain old maxim which is as full of meaning as an egg is full of meat, and it runs thus:

"There is no gain in burning out your candle at both ends."

Now the ordinary household endeavors to reduce needful expenses usually amounts to just this, and the candle is rapidly consumed.

There are many households wherein money is a scarce article, and they are greatly perplexed as to the ways and means of living, while their desire is to live gracefully, if not elegantly, harmoniously and comfortably.

How to do this is the vexed question of their lives; and it is rarely answered satisfactorily.

"We must economize!" exclaims *paterfamilias*. "Seems to me you need not have so many servants;" or perhaps the words run thus: "Seems to me you might at least do the housework, and save the wages and board of a girl."

Ah, well! it is easy to say this, but does he for one moment imagine of what the housework consists?

No, indeed, he is serenely unconscious of the work needful to keep up a clean, pleasant, and well-ordered house and a good table. He returns home nights and finds everything in order—carpets well-swept, furniture dusted, beds made, dinner cooked, and the family assembled to do him honor; and he takes all this as a matter of course, and cannot be made to understand the "*Ethics of the Household.*"

He cannot take into account the endless, wearing demands upon one's strength and nervous forces, which constant housework demands. Now, add to this the demands of children, society, etc., and when the whole is summed up, no one wonders that so many women are ailing, nervous and *cross*, if you like that term.

To be sure, his mother might have done and borne all this, but her tissues were of stouter material than those of the "*Women of the Period*;" and perhaps his father had two or three wives, for wives, alas! are always to be had; and in the country it is not uncommon to see men living with the third or fourth wife. Now, there may be economy in going without servants, but I never could see it.

Heroic women will often endure, for a while, but soon a break down comes—the doctor is called in, and rest is prescribed, but the tired frame cannot find it; there is no rest on earth; sleep cannot be wooed and won, head and back ache so severely.

A servant is now essential, but who is there to train her, to teach home ways, to be the intelligent head, while stronger muscles and tissues wash, iron, bake, roast, broil, boil, sweep, dust, and so on to the end of the catalogue of woman's work? It would not only have been downright economy to have had a servant in the kitchen, but it would have been a *matter of policy*.

Let us economize in our dress, our furniture, and if needs be in our tables, even to the extent of Dr. Dio Lewis' advice, but do remember that over-exertion on the part of women, daily fills not only graves, but *Insane Asylums!* Well for the woman is it, if God will only call her home, and not give her life bereft of all that sweetens it!

Then again economy suggests that the home shall be given up, and a boarding-house adopted as a change. This is one of the false notions of economy, and it sometimes seems to me the falsest. Give up the sunlight of home-life, the sweet home graces which are so needful for the growth of Christian character, for the narrow limits of one or even two rooms in a hotel or a boarding-house?

Ah, no, *we should never do this*: far better to rent some rooms in our *own* house, than to rent rooms in other people's houses, and take a seat at the boarding-house table.

There are those who have no homes, young men and young women earning their own livelihood, who are forced to find their comfort in a boarding-house; but it can, in the end, be no economy for a family to give up a home, and substitute a boarding-house for the lost fireside.

Children can never be well governed excepting at home, and they can also have no sense of home-life, its pleasures, delights, sorrows and griefs in a boarding-house. An economy which forgets this is surely neither wise nor successful.

The health of the soul and the culture of the heart are rarely thought of in boarding-houses, and they cannot be weighed by the standard weights of avoirdupois or apothecaries.

Boarding-houses are needful institutions, that no one will deny, but they are not economical for family life in the true sense of the word.

Again, economy is brought to bear upon the education of the boys and girls.

"No," says *paterfamilias*, "I cannot pay these bills any longer. James and Jane know as much as I did at their age: let them leave school now and go to work."

So the fiat goes forth, and the children are nothing loth to leave the school and try a new life; a little change being always agreeable to youth. Yet James and Jane, if they live, will deeply regret this false method of economy. Indeed, they may feel that they would rather have borrowed the money needful for an education beyond that which their father received, and paid for it out of their first earnings.

For an education would have given them keen-edged weapons of discipline and mental culture, with which they could have bravely fought the battle of life.

There is no economy in such sacrifices! True economy weighs loss and gain in a mental balance, and decides which is the best thing to relinquish and go without, while false economy is a wicked demon who devours much substance that is beyond price.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

"AGNES."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY GIPSY WILDE.

I have just seen the play of "Agnes." My friend says: "How beautiful! the effect is so soothing, so elevating!" I don't at all agree with him; I do say, it was *played* beautifully, that Miss Ethel acted the injured wife to perfection, and that she is a beautiful woman; and I say too, that it is true in most cases in real life; that there are a great many husbands as deceptive, as inconsistent, utterly incapable of the highest, purest love as this Stephen; and there are many wives weak enough, parasitic and subordinate in their love, as to forgive the most contemptible deception, and to seek a thousand excuses for the weakness, the inferiority and utter lack of manhood in their husbands; but because such love and such actions are universal, does not prove them right. The effect is bad, because it leads youth to think that marriage is not the beautiful, sacred and felicitous intimacy that poets and novel writers would have us believe; that such love as we read and dream of, is not to be found in real life; that they must not expect the same exquisite rapture after marriage as in the days of courtship. It teaches too, that a man may be erring, vacillating and cowardly and untrue, descend to falsehood and intrigue, aye even to the abuse of her he promised to love and cherish, and yet be forgiven, and not only that, but be re-enthroned; it teaches them not to expect truth and loyalty in man or woman, or at least, not to be surprised if they find their loved ones falsest of false things.

The effect is not soothing. One may be effected to tears from sympathy with the anguish of Agnes at the proof of her husband's untruth, but to a man and woman proud, self-conscious, equal in power and acquirements, royal and loyal in a real love, having their lives glorified, strengthened and hallowed by this love, to such the effect is to irritate, anger and disgust. In the first place, though it is a true picture of many loves, they are not true loves. A proud woman, with a pure soul, stainless heart and delicate senses, can alone truly and purely love. She believes the man she loves to be her highest ideal, her sine-qua-non; she could love nothing less, her nature could not descend; she loves him for his virtues, bereft of these, he is an animal; if he is her inferior he must dissemble and appear the noble being she believes him to be; the moment he gives her reason to question, to doubt his nobleness and goodness, that moment proves him her inferior and unworthy of her love. When Agnes saw her husband in Stella's room, heard him say words that should be hers alone; saw him do acts that should be sacred alone to her, was not that enough to prove her ideal hero the most contemptible of beings? that he was not her lover, nor the man for her to love? And again, the night of his intended flight with Stella, even then, coming to Agnes with smiles on his false face, kisses on his impure lips, falsehood on his tongue, and impatience in his manner to get away from her: and she knowing all this, would not a proud, pure woman have given him then and there the deepest scorn? would she not have trodden upon him as the poor, abject, gross, despicable creature that he was; despising herself that she could ever have dreamed she loved him? Would not such a woman have recoiled in horror from embracing so depraved an object? If such men would get the scorn and contempt they deserve, and not be wept over and cringed to, coaxed back and reinstated by silly women under the sentimental delusion that "women must be self-sacrificing, and suffer and bear, because it is their duty and weakness"—if there was more pride of soul and less pitiable passion, there would be less disloyalty, and stronger, purer men and women. The love that must be watched and prayed and wept into truth and honor is not real love; the soul that has to be barred and guarded, lest dishonor creep in, is not a soul to enshrine! What if he does come back, like the prodigal son, tired of husks, can he undo what he has done? Can the fabric once so fair, now stained, be made fair again? Can the idol, fallen so low, be re-created? Can she in her heart respect him? and if not respect, can she love? Can she look upon him as a pure, strong, manly man, and find sweetness, beauty and safety in his love? Never! Once fall, and he is liable to do so again.

Again, Stella in her advice to Agnes, says: "You women love your husbands too much. If you would keep their love, don't let them know how much you love them; tantalize, make them jealous, be indifferent, etc.!" Well, that is a universal idea, and it proves how few know what love is, and how to love! I agree—if one wants to flirt all her life—that it is the best plan to keep a score of lovers, admiring perhaps, but not loving, and you loving none: such love, fed by fear and jealousy, is passion alone and love of power, and demoralizes the heart and soul. True marriages are the rarest of all rare things; but there are *some*—and they all ought so to be. If two truly love, if they find in each other all they desire; if their ideal is realized in every respect; if they have no wish mentally, socially and physically that each cannot supply, or acquire, then it would be a farce to conceal their love; because the affection, the trust, the enjoyment of each other, is so complete, that to act a lie were a mockery. They are so entirely one, that the moment an emotion is suppressed, or assumed, it is known by the other. People are slow to comprehend this real, sacred, soul-and-body union: either wives will be dependent, servile and foolishly fond of their husbands, feeding upon their supremacy, and, retrograding themselves, thus losing their power and attraction; or they must coquette and play the agreeable to a score of men, caring nothing for their husbands. Or a husband must be reckless, inconstant and disloyal, or an indifferent, common-place and insufferably practical man.

There is but one remedy; perfect equality in marriage. A couple ought to know each other well enough. If they differ so much in acquirements as to be one greatly the superior of the other—if one has ambition, a passion, that the other has no sympathy with, they should not marry. Each should be sufficient for the other—each should be companion for the other; then there would not be that antipodal union of grossness and delicacy, exquisite tenderness and boorish indifference, proud purity and debasing disloyalty, absolute invincibility and contemptible weakness, but the poet's love would be the universal love; the ideal would be the real.

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WHEN I SAW SWEET NELLIE HOME.

In the sky the bright stars glittered,
On the grass the moonlight fell,
Hushed the sound of daylight's bustle,
Closed the "pink-eyed pimpernell,"
As along the moss-grown wood-path—
Where the cattle love to roam—
From Aunt Pattie's quilting party—
I was seeing Nellie home.

Jetty ringlets softly flutter
O'er a brow as white as snow,
And her cheek!—the crimson sunset
Scarcely had a warmer glow;
'Mid her parted lips' vermillion,
White teeth flashed like ocean foam!
All I marked, with pulses throbbing,
While I saw sweet Nellie home.

When the autumn tinged the greenwood,
Turning all its leaves to gold,
In the lawn by alder's shadow
I my love to Nellie told;
As we stood together gazing
On the star-bespangled dome,
How I blest that August evening,
When I saw sweet Nellie home.

White hair mingles with her tresses,
Furrows steal upon my brow,
But a love-smile cheers and blesses
Life's declining moments now;
Matron, in thy snowy 'kerchief,
Closer to my bosom come,
Tell me, dost thou still remember
When I saw sweet Nellie home?

HANDSOME.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

In life's best bloom.

Penorna House, Cornwall; time—a twilight evening in September; scene—the big drawing-room, red curtained, and fire lit, into which Lady Penrhyn's guests straggle, by ones, and twos, and threes, as the dinner-hour approaches. Nobody is extremely talkative; for what with scrambling about the cliffs, riding over the rugged moorland, and playing the last autumn game of croquet on the lawn, guests at Penorna are (as Mr. Adolphus George Tempest, one of them, remarks) "dead beat" by the time evening arrives.

Witness to his own declaration, he props himself against the wall, and looks down with lazy satisfaction on a brown head, satin smooth; the rounded oval of a fair, clear cheek, touched by a delicate curtain of silky fine lashes; a curved, rose-red upper lip; and a round, dimpled chin, supported half pensively on a round yet slender hand, white, but touched with the rosiness of healthy youth. The pretty picture is completed by a snow-fair neck, decked with a string of pearls, a muslin dress, crisp and clear, with a cluster of dewy, loose leaved pink roses, pressed cheek to cheek, at the bosom; and—a dark shadow to "throw up" the whole, in the person of Mr. Ralph Brydone, a retired Indian civilian, possessed of considerable means, a violent temper, and a strong inclination for the society of Miss Netta Thursby; to which last development of Mr. Brydone's character, "Dolly" Tempest (so happily nicknamed at school, and so, for his girlish complexion, his good looks, his softness, and his vanity, called ever since) opposes himself with all the passive force of his sweet-tempered, indolent, uncombative nature.

The rivals are such a complete contrast, that it is quite impossible for Netta, young as she is, taking her very first flight from under her mother's wing, not to have some choice between them. She smiles for both, blushes for both, and says, "Thank you" sweetly to both on small occasions; but then innocence is a better concealment than any amount of knowledge; and out of all those blushes, smiles and pretty signals, who shall mark the flag of capitulation? At present, the problem is harder than ever, for she sits between the two—Tempest leaning beside her, Brydone bending over her.

Brydone is short, broad-shouldered, dark, more powerfully than gracefully built. He was probably an awkward, uncouth boy; but as a man, he has a certain solid ease of bearing—a brusque, assured, yet calm manner—which gives his words and actions weight with his fellow-creatures. Who would imagine that he was ever weakly carried away by passion and impulse; or that that agreeable, lazy trifler, Dolly, had the most constant will of the two? Brydone's face is square; the mouth and chin somewhat coarse, though well cut; the nose large, but fleshy, and springing abruptly out from between the eyes, which are black, and rather blank, and have not much eyebrow. He has thick whiskers, but only a slight moustache; coarse, curly, coal-black hair; and large muscular hands. He dresses in a perfectly unassuming manner; wears rather loose clothes; uses thick sticks; and inclines to wear his hat either on the back of his head, for comfort, or rammed over his eyes, for concentration of thought. Such is Miss Thursby's suitor, who now addresses her with all the uninteresting "dog-in-the-manger" volubility characteristic of a doubtful lover in the presence of a rival. He cannot say what he wants to say himself; and he cannot bear the other should say it, or anything. Indeed, in Mr. Brydone's opinion, Mr. Tempest is a mistake, and should be wiped off the face of the earth altogether.

Pretty pink and white Netta, clean and fresh as a daisy, with her crisp, white frills and her bright up-looking eyes, is happily unconscious, as she will never be in years to come, of her position between these two—of the torments she must necessarily inflict on one of them. She chatters as much as Mr. Brydone will let her, and even breaks down his solid bass barriers with a silver treble stream, pleasantly aware of the placid, sky-blue eyes gazing down benevolently on the top of her head, which light up and lift their lazy lids at her stupid little jokes, though they remain superciliously serene at all the "good things" anybody else may say. She wonders who will take her in to dinner; so do they—Brydone with gloom, Tempest cheerily. "If I do, it will be just my luck," he reflects. His luck, it may be remarked, is consequently of a very different shade to other men's (by their own account).

"Mr. Tempest," inquires Miss Thursby rather abruptly, scattering to the winds some improving observations Brydone is making, and plunging, with the rashness of youth, into a perfectly abstract subject, "would you like to be a recluse?"

"Beg pardon, Miss Thursby."

Dolly is always begging Netta's pardon, for he is far too slow to follow her flights, too calm to be put out by them, yet too amused and admiring to pass them over. So, on the query being repeated, he ponders it conscientiously, while Brydone takes the opportunity of resuming his own subject; but Tempest bides his time, and comes in tranquilly and politely at the end of a sentence, with: "No, Miss Thursby, I shouldn't like it at all—costume, or cuisine, or anything."

Brydone again continues his story; but is again interrupted, and curses the topic of recluses.

"What is 'pulse,' Mr. Tempest?" asks Netta.

Tempest doesn't know; but after taking a broad mental view of the subject, makes a shot: "Sort of cream-cheese, perhaps?"—whereat Brydone sneers openly, and Netta observes that Mr. Tempest is "quite up in recluses," a modest piece of wit which is servilely applauded by both her auditors.

But now Lady Penrhyn, the hostess, makes a progress through the room, pairing off people for dinner, and Brydone flushes visibly through his dark skin, and scowls with unconscious anxiety. But the Fates are propitious to him for once, and poor Tempest is left behind, to take in a young lady who is really a very nice girl, but who appears to him so exactly like many other young ladies he has met, that he cannot in his inmost soul conceive the least reason for her existence.

Brydone is in high spirits, talks a good deal, and very well; pays compliments, perplexingly received by smiles, blushes, downcast eyes; elicits some few soft replies of the school-girl pattern: "It's very kind of you to say so;" "Oh, how *can* you, Mr. Brydone!" &c., which sound very endearing from those pretty lips; wonders why he is so in love with a child who cannot understand politics, or science, or anything that interests him; not so surpassingly beautiful—subject to small fits of wilfulness, little tempers, endearing little sanguinesses. Dolly, sitting opposite, undisturbed by these speculations, which go so far to spoil a lover's felicity, and his success, observes Brydone's brilliancy, and its reflection on Netta, who, as yet, does reflect her companion of the moment; and straightway resolves, with a grave, unselfish air, that "this must not go on." Like the child of nature he is, he mutters in the napkin with which he wipes the soup from his moustache: "Little darling! Such a brute as *he* is!" (the latter expression being used quite dispassionately, even pityingly); and leaning back in his chair, applies himself to gazing between two arums in the epergne, at Miss Thursby's fair round face, and the rosy little fingers that crumble her bread, till an injured glance from a severe, gray-headed butler paralyzes her. At this alarming moment, she glances across the table, and their eyes meet with comprehension, and neither can help laughing—and Netta blushes, and lo! Mr. Tempest, to his own utter horror and surprise, blushes too—at which his young lady is uncomfortable, and Brydone indignant, and, of course, a pause occurs in the conversation, wherein Tempest madly addresses his neighbor, and is distinctly heard to say: "Do you think butlers are unlucky, Miss Smith?"

Hopeless confusion falls upon everybody, and a general buzz of ridiculous conversation arises, during which Tempest feebly explains that he meant to say "aruma." "But my eye caught that fellow—and—in short—don't you see?"

But the young lady is injured, cannot or will not see, looks at him awfully, and remains stiff and suspicious "of that odd Mr. Tempest," for the rest of her existence at Penorna; while he laughs under his moustache at her air of offended dignity, and is most perfectly and amiably indifferent to it.

Dinner is over; butlers and arums alike cease to interest Mr. Tempest, and he confuses them no longer, but leans back in his chair; and, during the inevitable interval of wine-bibbing, falls into a soft reverie.

"Tempest *is awfully* handsome," says a guileless man, addressing the unfortunate Brydone, unconscious that if they were all Ojibbeways, instead of conventional Britons, the latter gentleman would be at this moment struggling with the former for possession of that golden-locked scalp of which he is so delightedly vain, and which he would certainly make a fight for.

Being, however, a Briton, Brydone replies with savage calm: "*Is* he?"

"Ah, *he* thinks so too, you mean," responds the guileless one, becoming dimly conscious of an antagonistic spirit in the above query, and anxious to keep the peace. "Well, *yes*; he is rather a fool about his face."

Brydone mutters: "Confound his face!" but is fortunately unheard; and after a minute begins (being in an evil frame) to bully his neighbor, a young barrister, so severely on the subject of Indian judicial law, that this latter is reduced to stuttering idiocy, and loses all enjoyment of life for the time.

Meantime, Tempest, as I have said, leans back, and is quite in a position to be described without further delay. He is extremely fair—what would be called "dazzlingly" so in a woman; the deep red curtain behind him throws up the pure pink and white of his transparent skin, the peculiar turquoise blue of his large eyes, the glossy yellow locks that wave, close shorn, round his head; the arched, delicate brows and long lashes, two or three shades darker, which relieve the insipidity that is sometimes the accompaniment of excessive fairness, especially in a man. His features are as nearly like those of a Greek statue as flesh and blood will allow of; broad low brow, straight nose, fine nostril, short, deeply curved upper lip, oval cheek, rounded chin; imagine a little less flesh, a little more expression, though not a great deal (which is sad in a hero,) a pent-house of floss silk moustache, and in Dolly Tempest the veritable conventional Apollo stands before you.

Dolly's figure does not discredit his face; five feet ten in height, somewhat slenderly made, somewhat indolent in movement, but by no means without promise of strength, and apt, if it were not so, to bring a (physically) grander type into disrepute, its laziness is so provokingly harmonious and graceful; while his hands, though they might be a girl's, they are so absurdly soft, white and slender, have done their fair share of deeds in flood and field. And now, what about the radiance required to light up, and shine through a structure so fairly endowed? Either the walls are unusually opaque, or the lamp has not fairly burned up, or is incapable of burning very brightly. For, melancholy to relate, Tempest has as little expression as a human being can have; the happiest, gentlest, most satisfied, almost childish smile, diversified rarely by a faint gravity, a slight cloud of pride or sullenness, is all; and, so far as anybody knows, truly indexes his character. He is always happy, yet ready to listen sympathetically if silently to the troubles of less lucky mortals, to do his mild best for them, always in the sweetest of temper with others and himself; well aware of, and delighted with, his own good looks and good luck. There lies his great fault; he is vain, though in an innocent absurd way, that excites a sort of affectionate contempt in his friends. His vanity is like a child's, which points a little finger at his own image in a mirror, and cries "Pretty, pretty!" and it must be a hard-hearted person indeed who can do anything but laugh when Dolly, advancing with a delicate fore-finger pressed on the bridge of his own irreproachable nose, inquires pathetically if there isn't a freckle coming there, and is grateful, as if for untold gold, when sympathizingly reassured on this important point.

Such, then, is Mr. Adolphus Tempest, briefless barrister, rich in friends, rather poor in money, remarkably poor in relations; a "good fellow," which may mean a good man, and—also may not.

On the first movement of the first man toward the drawing-room, he rises to his feet, and betakes himself with unusual vivacity up-stairs.

"*My* innings!" he romantically murmurs, dropping into a chair by Miss Thursby's side; and as he never moves from thence all the evening, and very seldom takes his eyes off two downcast white lids; and as Miss Thursby is "hoarse" when requested to sing, I can only conjecture that two people, at least, consider it appropriate that Penorna and Paradise should begin with the same letter; and that, arguing from the same premises, a third is of opinion that everything, Penorna included, is a mistake, and it is best to go to bed, and have done with it; which Mr. Ralph Brydone, who is not of an age to seek sympathy, or find comfort in "fellows" and smoking, and who, moreover, is not a woman, to put a good face on it, accordingly does, in disgust.

It was a calm and glorious autumn day; the pathetic, hectic loveliness of the "Indian summer" lay like the year's dying smile over the world. Not a cloud on the deep blue overhead, not a foam-wreath on the emerald sea that stole up to golden sands and gray and purple stones, and left a few rainbow bubbles among the garlands of dry brown sea-weed and white shells that lie silent and daily witnesses of the divine wonder of ebbs and tides. The leaves fell early here, where the winds were rough and high, and made a gorgeous rustling carpet, and left a fair fretted screen against the clear heavens; but in the sheltered gardens of Penorna House, on its sunny south wall, there were still crimson and yellow roses, and the flower-beds on the lawn were dazzling with late geraniums and verbenas.

Miss Thursby was sitting working in a little morning-room which looked out on the garden; she was still girlish enough to take an almost vital interest in fancy-work, despite the new and absorbing subjects which had begun to occupy her mind—of which, beside, she was rather afraid to think. In consequence, she was half annoyed, half nervous, when Mr. Brydone, strolling absently into the room, started on seeing her, assumed a hungry aspect, and sat down with a fatal air of intention.

Netta made a little movement to rise, repressed it, sat down, shut her lips fast, and worked on defiantly, while Brydone sat gazing gloomily at her.

"You are very much interested in your work, Miss Thursby," said he at last.

"Yes," she answered, with a spice of defiance in her tone; for she objected to the half-cross, half-patronising manner which was Brydone's unlucky method of showing his preference.

"Too much interested to honor me with more than monosyllables, perhaps?"

"Oh, no," she said, very indifferently, cruel with the ignorant cruelty of youth.

"And yet that was another monosyllable."

"I beg your pardon; I didn't know," she replied, in a docile, but, alas! feelingless tone. "Besides"—trying to laugh, and turn it off, as she had heard others do successfully—"if it *were*, how dreadful for you, Mr. Brydone!"

"Yes. 'He jests at scars who never felt a wound,'" said Brydone, bitterly, struck with, and despairing at, her utter childish unconsciousness. "Miss Thursby, I see you don't understand me in the least; I can see plainly—"

Netta rose desperately from her chair, without knowing what she did, and stood staring at him imploringly with her pretty bright eyes, round and clear like a frightened bird's, the rose-leaf color coming and going on her fresh cheek.

"Please, please, don't! I see perfectly," she stammered. "Please, Mr. Brydone—"

Brydone was about to break down her feeble guard with some fierce reply, when Lady Penrhyn appeared. That experienced hostess saw the situation with half an eye, and having no mind for the probable climax, sailed in, and sitting down by Netta, arranged her draperies serenely around her, and plunged into conversation. Brydone would fain have escaped; but she addressed herself chiefly to him, and presently said to Netta, who sat silent and pale beside her: "Child, how white you are! Run away into the garden, and get some air, and tell the gardener to cut me some roses for the table. No, Mr. Brydone, not you. *You* look extremely well, rather flushed, indeed"—(with malice;) "so stay and entertain me."

Netta scampered away, delighted at her dismissal, threw on her hat, and, haunted by visions of lovers bursting with proposals, made her escape by the back of the house, and so to the gardener's domain, where she delivered Lady Penrhyn's message, and then went strolling on dreamily across the sunshiny lawn, through the flickering light and shade of the thinning woods, across a rugged bit of "landscape gardening" or wilderness—Lady Penrhyn's last caprice, and so out of a little wicket, and down a steep cliff-path to the shining sea, singing, smiling, dreaming, all the way.

She went and stood on a big gray stone at the very verge of the sea, in it, even, for a crystal fringe lipped and whispered round it, and looked along the gleaming beach, white with pebbles and shells, golden with sand, with the water deeply blue in its little inlets, purple and green under the gloom of the great crags, glistening emerald where the sunlight filtered through shallows to yellow, treacherous sand-banks. She looked far out at the dim, lilac headland with its light-house, the tiniest white pillar cut sharp and glittering against the intense azure at the farthest point; at the lofty range of cliffs shelving gradually down behind her; but far away to the north, rising sheer and awful with jagged points, and sending a dreadful fortification far out to sea, round which the water boiled, white as wool, or swirled in cold, green-black eddies, crested with drift and yellow, churning scum. She could not resist wetting the tip of her little foot in the coy green ripple, or kneeling down, to the manifest detriment of her clean morning dress, to stretch after a spray of feathery scarlet sea-weed ebbing back with the gentle tide; dabbling her fingers till they were rosy and cold, and letting her broad hat flap into the water. Then she rose up again, with staid reflections of her recently-attained womanhood, and, shading her eyes, again looked out seaward. It is only to the young the sea is not sad, either as the type of, or as an actual separation.

Somebody as happy, as foolish, nearly as young, in nature, at least, as herself, was coming up softly behind her, unheard on the wet, gleaming sands. A man in the sort of rough morning suit in which nobody but a gentleman looks gentlemanly, but which is usually peculiarly becoming to him, if he be at all good looking. His eyes were exactly the color of the sky Miss Thursby was admiring (perhaps she admired it for that reason;) the color on his fair cheek was heightened, so that, if he had been a woman, he would have had a lovely complexion; but as he was a man, it was quite absurd; the sun played graciously on his comely yellow locks, and caught on his white teeth gleaming in a kind, tender, joyous smile. No girl had ever a handsomer, gentler lover, more fitted for the young romance which forms all below the fair surface out of its own fairer imaginings.

"You look very happy, Miss Thursby. Might one offer a penny—no, a rose—for your thoughts?"

Netta turned round with a happy start and a warm blush, and saw him holding a half-blown, creamy bud in his gloved hand. Tempest held the sternest views of the deference due to the softer sex, and had solemnly (and extravagantly) inducted himself into a pair of the palest gray "Jouvins" before going on his predetermined errand. (He had been known to catch a fearful cold in consequence of his punctilious gallantry. "What! wear a great-coat when I'm walking with a lady, my dear fellow? Impossible!")

He now mistook his companion's hesitation for refusal, and said, with that obtrusive and uneasy meekness to which vain people are prone: "*I* haven't worn it, I assure you. It's been in my hand all the way, and I've got gloves on."

"Oh, I didn't mean *that!*" answered she, confused into taking the rose. "But I was looking at the light-house, and you startled me. Thank you; I am very fond of roses."

"I wish *I* were a rose," observed Tempest meditatively, casting a stone into the sea, to the ruin of his gloves. "I wish—"

"Oh, Mr. Tempest, *would* you like to live in a light-house?" cried Netta, in almost entreating accents, taking refuge in her usual habit of abstract inquiry, and pointing a tragic finger at the edifice in question.

"Yes, awfully," he replied.

"Oh!" said Netta, forgetting her momentary alarm in wonder, "*would* you?"

"I should, upon my honor. With one condition annexed."

"What condition? I should like to know."

"Really, Miss Thursby?"

"Really, Mr. Tempest," said innocent Netta. "For"—reflectively gazing at him—"I should not have fancied that *you*— But what is the condition?"

"*You.*"

Poor little Netta! what a radiant, beautiful, uncomfortable blush flooded cheek, neck and forehead, made her eyes shine and grow dewy, and her red lip quiver piteously pretty and child-like; poor little Netta, who, fairly silenced by this bold attack, could only give a little sob, and involuntarily cast a glance of appeal at her persecutor, which had, by the laws of nature, quite a different effect to what she intended.

"Yes," continued Tempest, growing quite blatantly courageous, "you're the condition. I don't care—a light-house—a cave—a fisherman's hut—a—a cockle"—catching sight of one of these objects on the sand at his feet—"as long as you're there with me. I love you with all my heart and soul, Netta, and I want you to love me! Will you, *darling?*"

Whereupon Mr. Tempest, who, though sincere, was unoriginal, went down on his knees (into a pool of sea-water), and making a successful "offer" at a cold little hand, awaited a reply.

"Oh, please get up!" sobbed Netta, without the smallest dignity.

"Not till you say 'Yes.'"

"But I shan't, for such a long, long time."

"That means, you will in the end. My precious treasure! Oh, Netta, if you only knew how much I"—&c., &c.

"Oh, indeed, it doesn't!" cried Netta, aghast at this wide interpretation. "Think if any one should see you, Mr. Tempest!"

"Well, if they did! Do you suppose I'm *ashamed* of kneeling to you?" There was something very pleasant, and stern, and manly in his voice.

"N—n—no," she sighed. "Only—Mr. Tempest—"

"I'll not stand being called Mr. Tempest. Call me 'Dolly' once, and I'll get up."

Netta here became very prudent. "*That* cannot do any harm," she thought sagely. "He really ought to get up; he's catching cold, and spoiling his things." So she repeated with prim, timid little lips, and her long lashes quite on her cheek, "Dolly."

The faithless Tempest got up, and—promptly went down again.

"*Oh!*" cried Netta, scandalised. "You *promised!*"

"Oh, hang it, I can't help it!" cried Dolly, casting his honor recklessly to the winds. "You must say 'Yes.'"

"I can't."

"Well, will you answer some questions, then?"

Netta nodded mournfully,

"Do you like any one else?"

"No."

"Brydone?"

"*Oh*, no!" with a great increase of cheerfulness.

"All right. Would you like me to go away now, and never come near you again? Netta!" (pathetically), "would you like me to go away and live in—say the light-house—all by myself, and be wretched?"

"You know I shouldn't," said she tearfully, stricken to the heart by this melancholy picture.

"Well, then, my darling one, don't you see——"

But I need not follow Mr. Tempest through long and involved arguments. He was never clever, and he was less so than ever now; but, on the other hand, he was, despite his foibles, always manly, kind and honest; and his love made him doubly so at this moment. Suffice it to say that (by the time he was well wetted) he had good and sufficient cause to arise from his moist position, and to declare that he didn't think there could be any other fellow in the world as happy as himself; and that as to Brydone!—gloomy silence alone was capable of describing that individual's certain and abject desolation.

When, after a short interview of three hours or so, they had with difficulty resolved on returning, Tempest remembered that he had omitted a formality, and conscientiously remedied the mistake by inquiring: "Will you be my wife, then, my sweetest?"

"Yes, by-and-by," said Netta, who did not like this dry view of the subject so much as he did; life having, since his declaration, appeared to her a blissful standing on enchanted sands, looking over an enchanted sea, with Dolly always beside her, always telling her he loved her, and wanting to hear that she loved him. Tempest, however, differed from her, and was immediately filled with supererogatory rapture. "My *treasure!* said he. "Then ——"

But Mr. Tempest's reading of the result of her consent did not appear to Netta at all the blissful consummation it had to him; for she withdrew herself with considerable vivacity from him, and exclaimed with unflatteringly vehement entreaty:

"Oh no! *Please!* I don't like it at all.

"But, my darling!" urged Tempest, much wounded and surprised.

"No, *no*," said she positively.

"Then you don't love me Netta?" (with pathetic reproach).

"Yes, I do. Oh yes, *dear*," said she looking at him with a shy, coaxing smile. "But I'd rather you didn't, yet——"

"Well, I suppose everything must come 'by and by,' my pet," said Tempest good-naturedly. "At all events, you'll take my arm, won't you? You have not quite such a hatred for me as all that?"

"Not *quite*," she answered coyly; and so they went up the winding path, very slowly, leaving the bright sea and heavens behind them, and going back to Penorna, over which the sky was beginning to blacken ominously.

"We've had the bright part of the day together, at any rate, my darling," said Tempest, like a lover. "And I hope if there's any dark to come—in life, I mean—I shall have it alone."

"In a light-house," said Miss Netta, saucily.

CHAPTER II.

In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice.

The lovers had agreed not to mention their engagement till the sanction of Netta's parents had been obtained. It was not likely to be withheld, for Tempest, for a detrimental, was pretty well off, and had nobody to consult; and Netta was the third of a family of four girls and three boys, all more or less unprovided for. Nevertheless, both these young persons came in with such over-acted unconsciousness, that Lady Penrhyn smiled with significant benevolence upon them; Brydone looked blacker than thunder; and the very butler filled their glasses with solemn, congratulatory emphasis. Lunch proceeded much as usual, in spite of the convulsion of nature which had just occurred, till Brydone's neighbor of last night, who was sitting next to Miss Thursby, inquired of her if she had found her locket.

"What locket?" said Tempest, with a tragic air, across the table. He was not in the least jealous, in reality, this mild and amiable creature; but he felt it necessary to the situation, part of his love for Netta, to appear so.

"Where did you lose it?" inquire Brydone, more practically, and with a fierce wish that it might be somewhere where Tempest would not dare to venture his "pretty" face. Tempest's pretty face was, however, quite as likely to be foremost in peril as any ugly ones.

"No; I haven't found it. I dropped it on the cliff-path when we took that long walk to the 'Devil's Teeth,' from Trelnen, yesterday. It was one papa gave me on my last birthday, so I am very sorry to lose it," said Netta, answering the questioners inversely to her liking for them.

"I am afraid you won't get it again, then, dear," said Lady Penrhyn; and so the subject dropped, or rather a rattle of rain, and a fierce gust of wind against the window, turned the conversation.

In spite of the weather, however, two gentlemen were immediately after lunch called by pressing business to the little station four miles from Penorna. Tempest, who was the first to start, borrowed the keeper's Welsh pony, and (in spite of that lively little beast occasionally slipping from between his legs, or standing immovably, from the force of habit, to "point" at game) managed to catch an early train, and be deposited, amid blinding rain and bowling blasts, at a still more tiny and primitive station than the one he had left; with a good hour's start of his rival, who not being a favorite with the Penorna household, was obliged to trust to his own legs and luck.

He too, arrived, however, in due time at Trelnen, and made his way to the path which ran along the top of the precipitous cliffs Netta had seen from a distance that morning. The day had utterly changed; an awfully black sky hung over a leaden sea, whose long rollers of livid foam crashed like artillery against the rocks, and crawled hungrily over the sand. The tide, just at its lowest, was beginning to turn, and the smaller sea-birds, hopping about in search of food amid the débris of shell and weed, were driven ever higher up, with reluctant twitterings, from stone to stone. The wind howled and raved hideously, till Brydone was fain to ram his hat deep on his brows, and strike the stick he carried among the crevices of his stony road, to steady his steps. Sometimes his path was on the short fine turf, cut close by the keen wind, sometimes sheltered by cliffs rising on either side, sometimes only to the landward, and seaward nothing but a sheer slippery, gray wall, going down, when the tide was up, into a dozen feet of water; showing now, at its ebb, a *chevaux de frise* of ragged points, ghastly white; which reached a quarter of a mile out, and gave this part of the coast its dark name. Brydone was a sufficiently brave man, but he shuddered as he glanced down, and pressed closer to the inland wall. He was more preoccupied than he could afford to be on such a road in such weather, and more than once ran cheek or shoulder against a projecting crag, incidents which made him scowl at his own folly in coming here at all, and think, with sad and savage intuition, how vain that folly was.

However, he was in for it now, and went doggedly on, unconscious that Tempest was before him in this also, in luck as in love, imagining "that soft-voiced idiot" coddling himself in the biggest arm-chair by the fire in the large drawing-room, maundering poetry to the ladies, kept indoors, like them, by a little rain. "Ah, if women only knew?" said poor Brydone, falling into the not uncommon mistake of thinking that the gilded casket means necessarily emptiness within, and the leaden one, a gift of great price. He had left Trelnen half-a-dozen miles behind, and the Devil's Teeth rather more than two, when, emerging at one of the abrupt turns of the path from the craggy double wall, he saw a few yards before him, cut clear against a brassy gleam on the sky, a figure he at once recognized, which sent the blood boiling from his heart to his cheek, and made him stand still and clench his teeth for an instant, with impotent passion. Distanced everywhere! The man was before him here too—the handsome, happy, successful man.

It was a small drop of bitterness, but it overflowed his cup; and while he stood motionless, white, and drawn together with a silent agony of rage, he saw Tempest stop suddenly, bend down, and pick up something with a gesture of joyous triumph. The crimson sunset light burst from the clouds as he did so, and showed his face, fair, tenderly, joyously vain of his own success—his sunny hair, his white hand with the recovered locket glittering in its palm.

Then something rose within Ralph Brydone, he never knew what; but with a strange, strangled cry, a heavy staggering run, he found himself behind the triumphant lover, and striking out blindly, madly.

He had thought, indistinctly, as he ran, of a struggle—but there was none; of a tragic cry, a groan; but before him now there was only vacancy, instead of that hateful, handsome rival; in his ears, nothing but those stupid, simple words, cried out faintly, it seemed in mid-air: "I've found it, dar—" And then silence had closed again. Whatever wickedness was in him had gone out in that blow; yet, for the moment, not understanding what he had done, he only reproached himself thus: "I struck him from behind: I did not let him see me—"

Then he turned slowly on his heel, and stared all around; at the turf at his feet, quite smooth and undisturbed, save for ordinary foot-marks; at the rugged, gray moorland; behind, the red, blood-red sky, with the white wing of a wildly screaming gull flashing across it; in front, and down at his feet, the angry foam of the in-coming tide. Only that? Was that shapeless gray thing a piece of stone, fallen away from the crags, a spar—or— Why did the gull scream so, like twenty birds? Had it seen—

The wind was still enough now, and the sole sound was his own heart, beating like the clapper of a bell. No; across the waste, along the cliffs, the sand, the waves, came a swell of melancholy music, swelling, resounding, seeming to roll away the driving clouds from heaven's face. It was only the chimes of St. Michael's, Trelnen, playing some old-world psalm-tune, but it rang like the last judgment knell through Brydone's brain.

He realized all now. "What have I done?—Tempest!—Oh, my God!" And he rushed back blindly along the path; but all the time came crowding over him, not the last tragic scene, but foolish, trivial recollections of Tempest's sweet temper, his forbearance, his innocent vanity, his harmless, endearing foibles, his staunch, sincere, manly courage. He had torn the black veil that distorted those kindly qualities from his own eyes, but at what a price? That very morning, at breakfast, Tempest had turned off some insolent speech of his, Brydone's, with a gentle jest that shamed him to himself, and saved him from blame before others; a few days before, when he was ill and depressed, and disagreeable with an attack of liver, Tempest had left the cheerful circle below to sit with him and talk—not wisely, if you like—but his best.

Brydone had looked at him then, and hated him for those blue eyes and womanish blushes, his pleasant vanity, his success; and now, he would never succeed again. But wild regret, vain remorse, were suddenly quelled; for a sharp, rocky point, jutting out, smote him on the forehead, and he fell, stunned and senseless, across the path. The morning was rising dreary and cold when Brydone opened his eyes, and, raising himself painfully on his arm, gazed, aching and torpid, around. Gray sky, gray sea, stormy no longer, but veiled in a calm, melancholy haze, from which a white sea-bird started, ghost-like, now and then, with a shrill cry; gray rock behind him; that very crag, which had checked his mad progress last night—nothing living in sight. He remembered that crag, remembered all by degrees, and dropped back again with a groan.

Most of us know what it is to wake with a dull sense of last night's sorrow heavy upon us; imagine how it felt to this man to wake to undying knowledge of his own guilt—to the undying recollection of that proud figure, that gay, happy face, that piteous natural cry—to have them before his eyes, in his ears, forever. Confession never occurred to him, as he struggled, groaning, to his feet. Before he was well awake to the bitterness of his own sin, he was already revolving in his stunned mind how best to conceal it—what story he should tell at the Trelenn station, and at Penorna. He could make no definite, detailed plan; but when he arrived at the railway, his sahy-pale face, damp garments, and bruised head, even his very expression of incoherent dismay and despair, witnessed to the truth of his confused and fragmentary tale. He said to the station-master that he had come over from Penorna on the previous day to make search for a locket a lady who was staying there also had lost on the cliff above the "Devil's Teeth;" that, while walking along the cliff-path, he had discerned at a distance a gentleman, also a guest at Penorna, whom he had imagined to be on the same errand as himself; that, while still far off, he had seen the latter stoop to pick up some object, and, in so doing, overbalance himself, and fall over the precipice. He added, with an emotion but too real, that on hurrying up, he could perceive no trace of his friend, and that, in rushing back horror-struck, to procure assistance, he had run his head against a rock, stunned himself, and in consequence remained senseless until morning.

"Can you tell whereabouts the gentleman fell over, sir?" asked the station-master.

Brydone thought a moment, and named the part of the cliff immediately above the Devil's Teeth; not from any special motive, but simply because one lie more seemed to matter little now, and falsehood was on the side of safety.

"Then there isn't the shadow of a chance of his life, sir, I'm afraid," said the man gravely, "nor even of his body coming ashore. Those Devil's Teeth never let anything go they have once had hold of; and there's an eddy there, beside, the people hereabouts call "Hell's mouth," that would tear a man-of-war to pieces in a couple of hours."

Brydone heaved a great sigh, and turned away relieved, and then felt an odd, inconsistent pang of remorse that his victim's body should not have Christian burial, nor its due anointing of tears and prayers. Leaving the station-master all the money he had about him, as a salve to his conscience to pay for the misdirected search, and promising to return or send over in a few hours, he went back to Penorna. The familiar scene sickened him as nothing had done yet; his knees trembled, his head swam, as, going in by the back entrance, he bade one of the servants—who stared at him as if he were a ghost—ask Lady Penrhyn to come and speak to him—Mr. Brydone—in private. She came instantly, prepared for alarming news by the prolonged and unaccountable absence of her two guests, as, indeed, was the whole household. She could scarcely free herself from poor, little, pale Netta, who had clung to her kind hostess, or followed her about, dumb and white, with beseeching eyes, all the day before, and implored her every now and then, with childish iteration, to "say he will soon come back." Brydone told his story again; and again his miserable appearance, broken voice, and unmistakable anguish of mind, earned him perfect freedom from suspicion. To Lady Penrhyn he also expressed deep remorse for his past conduct to Tempest, attributing it to its true motive, jealous affection for Netta, and, in consequence, won the former's regard as he had never done yet. She pitied, and tried to comfort him, and would not hear of his returning to Trelenn; but sent him to lie down, or, at any rate, be quiet, in his room, while she promised to take measures to have every search made.

"But I much fear it is hopeless," said she, sighing, "for I know that part of our coast is— Are you ill, Mr Brydone?" His open mouth and strained eyes, staring at something behind her, caused the alarmed inquiry.

"Look there, Lady Penrhyn! Look! I have killed her!" cried he in a voice of horror, and Lady Penrhyn turned.

Netta stood in the doorway, raised on tip-toe, perfectly white, with her eyes stretched wide open, and the pupils dilated till they were black, with her lips apart and moving fast without uttering a sound, and her little hands clutching her dress.

"Netta, my poor child!" cried Lady Penrhyn, running toward her, and taking her into her motherly arms, "don't look so. Let yourself cry."

"I—do not want—to cry," said Netta rigidly; "I—heard *all*. How could I cry?" But nevertheless her words ended in a long wail; and in a minute more, she was sobbing out her grief and her love on her kind friend's breast with piteous cries. "Oh, why didn't I kiss him! He asked me, he wanted me to— And now I shall never, never see him again! Oh, what shall I do!"

A party went over to Trelenn—alas! how different to the gay parties that had left Penorna two days before—search was made; but a search which might probably have been ineffectual even in the true spot of poor Tempest's fall, was utterly unproductive under the false directions given by Brydone. The seekers, too, knowing the character of the crags and the eddy, despaired beforehand, and after many hours' work, returned empty-handed and hopeless.

Next day, Netta's father, who had come down to give his consent to his daughter's engagement, and perfect her happiness, took her back to her mother, widowed and mourning, with nothing but a faded rose-bud as a fit memory of the love that had been blighted so soon; and Brydone, after forcing himself to endure a week's misery at Penorna, to do away with the chance of any suspicion falling on him, departed also. I cannot help thinking, while writing this, how mildly, even tenderly, some of us are apt to speak of people who are governed by the impulses of the moment. Yet it was a moment's impulse that made Ralph Brydone a murderer.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ Small-pox appears to be the cause of more of man's inhumanity to man than any other that can be mentioned. A selfish dread of the disease is the cause of selfish neglect of the unfortunate victims everywhere. Viola Vance, an actress, died recently in New Haven of this loathsome malady, and it has transpired that she was kept in a little shanty in the backyard of the almshouse with no proper care, and with such lack of provision for comfort as would have been almost fatal to a healthy person.

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

or,

The Phantom of the Black Hills.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Dicky, Rubber Dick, what on airth is the matter with yer anatermy? Yer meat seems ter be erfected with the Saint Vitus's dance."

"Me see print of one moccasin—small foot—go this way"—stepping with the toes out, and his eye flaming red in its excitement.

"A mogerrin mark, hey? Thar's nothing about that ter make a feller's muscolor system tie in knots, is thar? But what's footprints to do here? It's mostly a hoss trail, ain't it?"

"Yah—so. Some scuffle here—big foot—little foot trackee round an' round. Small foot all same party—try heap much to get away. Last night, s'pose. Camped here. All sleep. Small foot try to get off. Lookee—creep here—no dent much—creep, creep, creep! Thar—hoss tied—get him loose—see trackee—horse trackee close to small moccasin—then big foot come light after. See! no big dent thar—catchee small foot—some dance—heap dance, yah-ugh!"

Down now, pawing and scenting about the grass, Rubber Dick acted the animal to perfection.

"Heap fight—runee round and round and blood—some drops, yah-ugh!" and lifting himself to his feet, he whetted his arms together and emitted a long, quivering yell.

"Bottle up yer superflewities, Dick, an' ef yer bound ter bust yerself, let us fellars know, that we may stan' from under," remarked Wertzal in his peculiar, slowly-pronouncing manner, while he gazed with a species of astonishment upon the antics through which the half-breed was going.

"You big, ugly fellar, you no gettee hold yet? Me follar that small foot afore—way yonder in ther hill—'mong Ponces. My squaw foot—my squaw!" and again looking toward the hills, he gave vent to that savage cry.

"We're gwine to lose the off hoss," significantly said the old scout, jerking his head toward Rubber Rick, "an' I've a mind ter trot in company till I see the end ov this squaw business."

"I am with you," returned Marsh, in whose mind was a lively interest to behold Dicky's wife.

"We vote the same way," continued the other members of the party, and so the half-breed's patience was not taxed with long delay. He led off at a rapid pace, only using due precautions against surprises. The braves whom they were pursuing did not form a numerous party, but were evidently returning from a victorious raid somewhere, as the track showed the curvetting and prancing of the flank and van warriors.

The feverish haste of Dicky did not prevent his using great vigilance in ascending any slight elevations, and in watching the trail. Before nightfall they came up to the remains of a fire where the chiefs had, doubtless, halted for dinner; as Wertzal, by thrusting his hand a among the ashes, discovered warmth. They seemed to be directing their course toward a large encampment, which our traders had sighted and shunned the previous day, having made out by the form of the lodges that they were Sioux Tetons, that merciless and blood-thirsty tribe that wage relentless warfare upon other aborigines of the plain.

At dusk they were so closely pressing upon the savages that they thought best to halt and reconnoitre.

Wertzal and Dicky moved cautiously along the trail, while the others remained with the horses. In less than an hour they could hear the brawling of a stream, and distinctly smelled smoke. The victorious braves were gorging their "inner Injins" with the remains of a buffalo, obtained, probably, earlier in the day. The view taken by the unseen spies was long and satisfactory. They made out that there were only ten or a dozen chiefs in all; the flickering firelight showed two or three spears stuck into the earth, and from the point of each dangled and drifted wisps of coarse, black hair.

Noiseless as fate, Dicky and the one-eyed scout, withdrew to the place where the others awaited their approach. Here a few moment's consultation was held in regard to a plan of attack. Rubber Dick, keeping in mind the small figure drawn aside almost in the complete shadow, with her elbows resting upon her drawn-up knees, and her face hidden in her hands, betraying not only weariness but a grim despair, would not allow of the plan to wait until midnight, when peradventure a part of the camp might be asleep; but motioned immediate return and sudden attack from two sides, giving the idea of a much larger number of assailants than really existed.

This plan was finally adopted—and with extreme care the two parties, guided, one by Wertzal and the other by the half-breed, stole forward toward the unsuspecting Sioux.

The time of attack was anticipated some moments by some strange, unusual twitterings off to the right, toward the hills. The gourmands arose suddenly, and their scouts stalking silently forth to investigate, nearly trod upon their hidden foe.

Rubber Dick, from his hiding-place in the scant border of bush, gave the initiatory yell, and the whole party rushed into the fray.

At the moment when the fight became general, the half recumbent savage captive suddenly leaped to her feet, seized a tomahawk dropped from a warrior's grasp, whose head had lost its level already, and with the spring of a tigress had buried it in the skull of the chieftain who had seemed to be her especial guardian.

Without waiting to know who were the assailants, and not recognizing Dicky's voice, strangled as it was by the pressure of some copper-colored digits, she fled into the surrounding darkness.

When the contest had been brought to an end by the flight of the four or five unharmed savages, who probably, feeling that they had got the worst of the contest, intended by withdrawal to plan for another attack, Dicky with the blood running from several gashes, left the others to return to the animals, while he made search for the fugitive.

The other four members of the party felt it wisdom to move rapidly back the way they came, until they should find a suitable halting place where they could await his return.

The sun was nearly an hour high when Rubber Dick, with an exulting cry, came bounding down the slope toward them, and the scarlet petticoat of his pretty squaw drifted across his knees as she kept beside him with the springing step of an antelope.

The velvety look of her large eyes was absent now—the fiery gleam betokening the awakened savage within her soul. That she was beautiful, the previously interested Richard Marsh had to acknowledge; but the lightning sweep of her rounded arm driving the hatchet into the skull of her captor, had swept away a huge illusory veil from his vision.

A scion of whatever stalk she might have been, her nature had become identical with the tree upon which, in early years, she had been engrafted.

But Dicky, disdaining cuts and bleeding and smarting pain, swung the lithe and graceful figure of his bride upon the horse with him, and exultantly galloped for ward.

CHAPTER XXIII.

KIDNAPPING.

The passing months had brought many changes to the fortunes of some of our friends. Mr. Burke suddenly smitten down by malarious fever, had died. Benjamin, the sturdy pioneer, had brought home a wife; and now Kate felt as she never could have done during her father's life, that she could go away from home. Lieutenant Strother, tiring of his commission at the fort, had crossed the Rocky ridge and found an opening for his talents in Arizona; and at last, Catherine heeding his incessant urging, consented to join her fortunes with his, and to get through some rent of the mountains to the sunset side. Harry was with Captain Vance, quartered with coyotes and aborigines in his new agency.

Now arose the potent question what is to be done with Emily?

"There, I know," she said, speaking upon the subject, "don't it seem just now as if I were entirely out of place everywhere?"

"We want you right here," stoutly affirmed the young bridegroom, Ben.

"If you only would stay," put in his nice little wife.

"But oh, my sakes, I can't. It is such a breaking up of the family, Ben; I should be homesick and pine away and die gradually."

"Come to Arizona then," said Kate.

"Would I have to cross the Plains? I never could attempt that feat again."

"There is no other feasible plan," put in Strother, "unless we could charter a balloon."

"There now—how nice!" exclaimed she, ecstatically, "if you only would, Mr. Strother."

"I certainly would, Mrs. Armstrong, if I could; but we haven't time to get one up, and I suppose must try a passage along the earth."

"Well, pray give me the night to ponder upon it. The only light that I have upon the matter now, is what an elegant caption my dilemma would make for a story—'Which Shall I Choose; or, The Two Journeys'—there! well, it is dreadful."

She retired early to her low room at the end of the balcony, to think the matter over and decide upon her future course. The night outside hung low, was full of moaning wind and rustling of leaves, and altogether gloomy. Her window was open still, although the season was somewhat late, but the vines festooned across it made a lovely curtain. She could arrive at no decision in regard to future movements. While she pondered, a sudden dash of rain spattered the leaves, a sprinkling, stopping as unexpectedly as it commenced.

"Here to remain after Katy goes," she soliloquized, "would be but little better than making a home with strangers. Beyond the mountains is a wild country—and, again, should we ever get there?"

Another rustling of the vines caused her to glance in the direction of the window. What a start for only beads of rain. It seemed like the central gleam of two fiery eyes. The sudden lull of the wind makes the tumultuous shaking of the leaves unusual. See! there *are* fiery eyes looking blinklessly upon her, for on each side of them are the hands that draw the tendrils asunder.

Her heart gave a sudden plunge that almost suffocated her. Yes, in the calm she could hear heavy but suppressed breathing. If she should cry out, the others, chatting gayly so far off, would not hear her; there being a long corridor flanked by sleeping rooms between the apartments which she occupied and the sitting-room of the family. She dared not attempt leaving the room, as the burning lamp would expose every movement, and, perhaps, hasten the crisis.

But she could not remain inactive with only those vine tendrils between her and she knew not what calamity. With the horrible sensation that perhaps a bullet would pierce her heart on her first movement, she ran for the door, which luckily was unfastened, and dashed into the corridor. A chilly draught of outside air met her—another step forward, and she stumbled into the very arms of a man crouching by the door. Before she could draw the second breath she was caught up, a hand of iron pressed against her mouth, and the marauder stole swift and noiselessly along the entry into the open air outside.

A terrible conviction of who held her in his power settled upon Emily's mind. She had caught a glimpse of the same broad-brimmed hat worn by the suspicious, moody stranger who had months before, at the distant township, when she was hurrying to the fort to meet as she supposed her cousin Richard, spied about the inn, but was probably daunted in his intentions of kidnapping her by finding the few brave men who went as passengers on that trip.

It was the renegade half-breed, who should have been well smoked and cured at the time the kaleidoscope-faced Sioux intended to have a social hop with other rats of the tribe, but who playing as good as dead with them, and distorting his muscles when tied, and afterwards by relaxing them, and other "ways that are dark," spoiled their roast.

It was evident that his mongrel brain had conceived the idea that the lily-faced, yellow-haired girl was his especial foundling.

By lying some time passive, as he flung her upon his horse and, himself mounting, held her in place, she threw him sufficiently off his guard to allow of her tearing aside the scarf with which he had muffled her face, and uttering a clear, wild, thrilling scream. The swarthy captor saw that it was not repeated.

And in the common sitting-room of the Burkes, Lieutenant Strother had suddenly sprung to his feet, with the startled exclamation:

"What was that? Did you hear it, Ben?"

"I heard some sound, but nothing distinctly. What do you imagine it to be?"

"Why, a woman's scream, off to the west of the settlement."

"A woman's scream? I guess not." And all moved toward the door.

"How happened it, Kate, that the windows are closed? We might have heard more distinctly."

"The insects were so plentiful at sundown, that I did not care to have the sitting-room swarmed."

On the door-step they met a neighbor.

"What in the devil is up, Ben?" was the first exclamation.

"Why?"

"Why, I swear, if I didn't hear somebody yelling for help a mile or two away, then my ears wa'n't mates."

"I don't see what it can mean. Did you hear it more than once?'

"Only one time. Do you mind taking your horse and going out a piece? I don't like the sound.

"I'll be ready in a minute, but first, let me inquire if Emily heard it; her window is always open."

Ben stepped up to the piazza window and called "Emily." No reply, and yet her lamp was burning.

"I guess she's gone into the sitting-room," soliloquized he, moving along until he discovered what he had not noticed before, that the outer door leading through the corridor was open.

"She's in the garden," he farther mused, and walking to the end of the piazza he called repeatedly, "Emily! Emily!"

No answer.

"Where is she?" he questioned, coming back to the door-step where his sister and Strother still stood listening. "I thought she must be with you."

"No; isn't she in her room?"

"Her lamp is burning, but I didn't see her; and I called, but she did not answer."

"I'll go into the chamber above; she writes there sometimes in the evening, and you, Strother, walk down to the grapery. She must have heard the cry if she were outside, and I want to know what she makes of it."

Both were back from their bootless errand directly, and then Kate said laughingly—

"Ben, run over to Mrs. Vickey's and tell Emily it is funny that she should run away just now when we want her."

Ben was gone but a few moments when he returned with a half comical, half troubled expression.

"It's curious she hasn't been there to-day. Stay!" he went on in such an altered tone, that his sister struck with a sudden conviction screamed out—

"My Father in Heaven!"

"Does she ever leave the corridor door open when she runs off of an evening?"

"Never. She is too timid. She always fastens it on the inside and goes out this way."

"Then for God's sake come with me!" exclaimed her brother, snatching up a lamp and striding excitedly along the way to their friend's apartment.

The outer door was open and noiselessly swinging in the fitful evening wind. Ben and Strother bent to the floor.

"Ah!" both ejaculated, "here is the muddy track of a stockinged foot along the entry—the poor girl is gone—it was *her* cry that we heard."

Catherine wrung her hands in agony.

"Oh, Mr. Strother—oh, Ben, do, do go quickly and see if you cannot overtake them. Oh, dear—oh, dear Emily—what shall we do? What shall we do?" The trampling of the neighbor's horse was heard outside. Ben and his brother-in-law dashed for the stable, while Kate and Ben's wife wept tears of anguish and terror. Bad news flies rapidly, is an old and true maxim, and, before an hour had passed, the whole settlement was aroused, and feeling convinced that no body of foes lurked near the place, a score or more of brave fellows scoured off in the direction from whence the cry had sounded.

But you conjecture that pursuit was useless, for the miscreant had too much the start, and, again, the plains beyond Burketon were just at that period of the year a perfect zigzag pattern of paths, and so there was no hope of striking the trail of the kidnapper among so many others.

"Who could have done this thing?" one and another questioned.

"One of two parties," replied Ben, convincingly. "Either the Sioux, who originally predestined her for the squaw of his wigwam, or the half-breed renegade who assisted in the attack upon the mail-stage. As there is a large party of Indians in at the trading post, ten miles below here, it may be—it must be one or the other whom I have named."

"What is to be done?" questioned Catherine, wiping the scalding tears from her eyes.

"Nothing better can we do, that I see," returned her husband, "than for me to postpone my intended departure for Arizona for a few days, and go down to the fort and send out a half dozen of the old, experienced scouts to find and follow up the trail."

"If we could find Wertzal," said Ben.

"We *must* find him, and Rubber Dick, if possible, with two or three more who are better than sleuth-hounds, and could accomplish more in one day at tracking renegades than we could in a month."

"Poor Emily, in the meantime," cried Catharine.

"My dear, she will be safe enough for the time—she certainly is with her lover, as this is the precise style of frontier half-breed wooing. I will immediately ride off to find aid, and when my business is accomplished in that direction, I will come or send for you to meet me at the Fort."

"I don't want to ride far alone, Strother," said his wife."

"You will not need to; the stages are crowded at this season, and again, your route from here to Fort L—— will skirt all the distance along by settlements."

"Don't fail to find Wertzal," called Ben after him, "and if I hear of him within a hundred miles of this place, I will find him within twenty-four hours."

With this mutual understanding the brothers-in-law separated; both of them feeling infinitely more anxiety about Emily than they were willing to acknowledge to their distressed wives.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Story of Love and Fidelity.

Capt. Charles Vincent sailed from Boston to Calcutta in the month of August, 1849. He left in a quiet town, Bangor, Maine, a young girl of 18, to whom he was betrothed. Capt. Vincent was but twenty-five when, on that August day, his ship, "Laura Sheldon," stood gayly out to sea. No anxiety was felt for his safety till nearly a year had elapsed, and no tidings of either ship, officers or crew had been received at home. Years came and went, and hundreds of staunch East Indiamen sailed into American harbors, but never a word regarding the ship "Laura Sheldon" was received. In the meantime the young girl, faithful to the memory of her sailor lover, remained unmarried, refusing many advantageous offers from suitors her equals in social position and intellectual culture, for she is a lady of superior mind. Through all these twenty-nine years of silence she has been hopeful, and indeed, cheerful. She has never despaired of the return of her lover. On the 15th of September a letter was received by her aged mother, postmarked "Liverpool." The writer was Capt. Charles Vincent, now a man of fifty-four years. He asked her to inform him if her daughter was still alive and unmarried, and said that if the reply should be to that effect that he should sail at once for America. The mother immediately answered this letter, carefully concealing everything from her daughter. On the first day of this month Captain Vincent alighted from the stage at the door of his betrothed. Of the circumstances of the joyous meeting of these long separated lovers we are not permitted to speak; they are too sacred for the public ear. Capt. Vincent's story would fill a volume. The "Laura Sheldon" was wrecked in the Indian ocean, and only the captain and one sailor survived. They were rescued from their perilous condition on a raft after two days by a brig bound to China. In one of the Chinese seaports, Capt. Vincent lived for years, a clerk in an English trading house. He wrote several letters home, but received no answers. He gradually became prosperous in business, and will return to China in a few months with his bride.

☞ George Clark sneaked into a trimmings store at Twelfth and Pine streets, about 7 o'clock in the evening. Nobody was about, and George pulled out the money drawer. That drawer happened to have a big gong connected with it. George was astonished at the noise it made, and somebody else was surprised at a coat-tail going suddenly out of the door. Clark was pursued and captured.

☞ The latest funny blunder occurs in a New York evening paper, in which the sentence "Muscles can be educated as well as the intellect" appears "Mules can be educated as well as the intellect."

☞ A literary correspondent of the Pittsburg (Pa.) Gazette, signs himself O. Phiddle Styx.

☞ Among the recent postal decisions are the following: Railroad postal clerks are required to take mails up to the last moment before the starting of the train. A married woman has a right to require that letters addressed to herself should not be delivered to any one but herself or on her order.

THE SILVERS' CHRISTMAS EVE

BY ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD.

CHAPTER I.

VIOLET SILVER.

It had its commencement like a romaunt of Fairy Land, amongst the roses and in the moonlight.

A great emerald bank overhung a vast lake, fringed at its foot with a golden beach, and crowned with great pines, mingling their spicy incense with the breath of the roses swinging their crimson blossoms in the garden, midway up the steep, where, on a natural terrace, glimmered the white columns of a pretty house.

A wide lawn sloped to the beach, beaconed with guelder-rose-trees and acacias, flinging pearly globes and drooping feathery blooms in the air, heavy with dewy perfume, and two or three beeches echoed back the sleepy murmur of the lake, as their leaves rustled softly to the passing wind.

On the wide lawn a maze of winding paths led in and out through the glowing alleys of every kind of rose that ever blushed beneath the sun, or yielded pearly favors to the riotous summer breeze, and hence it was that Arnold Silver's pretty villa by the lake was called "The Roses."

A hedge of dwarfish myrtle enclosed this radiant spot, and for artistic contrast with the masses of bloom within, a melancholy yew loomed darkly by the wire gate, taking a paly silver from the moonlight, which poured a second deluge of radiance from the summer sky, purpling to amethyst where it kissed the lake; but above, a deep and tender blue, bridged with golden stars, and the silvery pathway of the milky-way.

Far out on the lake a schooner glided phantom-like across the diamond track of the moonlight, which seemed leading to the mysterious amethyst gates of the dim horizon; nearer land, the lights of the villa, poised midway up the hill, sent lances of red light deep into the placid bosom of the inland sea, hardly palpitating as the odorous wind stole across it.

A fountain opposite the drawing-room windows, sprang, a shaft of diamond splendor against the moonlight, and by its marble margin stood a tall, slender girl, in a white dress, her arm over the neck of a white doe, at the feet of which crouched a fawn with great dusky eyes and a collar tinkling with silver bells round its graceful neck.

Miss Violet Silver, Mesdames et Messieurs, only child and heiress of Arnold Silver, the great merchant, who, as the fairy tales say, "might have eaten gold every day," or, like the famous king, have occupied himself principally in "counting out his money," and found plenty of work at the same pleasant task.

Violet looked in the moonlight what the "gariah day" would still behold her, a superb young creature, triumphant in the matter of a matchless face and form over a host of rival belles.

She was tall, and lithe as a young panther in a tropical jungle, but no dove that parted the blue of Heaven with snowy wing had a plume whiter than her face was fair, though, mark you, there was but little of the dove in her flashing blue eyes, in the arch curving of her scarlet lip, or the faint dilation of a nostril as pink as the glow seen against the light through a white sea-shell.

My Violet's nose was of the haughty Spanish type, and there was a Castilian air about this rosy blonde, when the caprice held her, to walk through the world with her head up, and scorn the earth, which only occurred when Silver *pere* wrought himself to such a pitch of despotism as to forbid her skating on the lake when the ice was rotten, or refused to let her ride "Thunderer," or declined to settle annuities on two or three dozen new *protégés*, or otherwise misdemeaned himself after like atrocious ways.

Where occur the lines, so happy in their simplicity:

"Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And honor charmed the air,
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair!"

They describe my sweet Violet, my nineteen year old sylph, with the sinless brow and the radiant young eyes, better than if I fled with a diamond pen over a MS. of lily leaves from "morn till dewy eve." Rest you content, fair sir, she was altogether lovely, and so worthy your regard as the heroine of this unpretending Canadian tale, though I shall not linger to give, like Olivia, "divers schedules of her beauty."

She looked at the moon, where she walked in fullest beauty amongst her starry host, and as the virginal light bathed her and her dumb companions, they looked like some lovely group of enchanted creatures suddenly turned to forms of pearl by the potent wave of a genl's hand.

Heaven alone knows what sublime thoughts made the girl's countenance so angelic, as her shining eyes fell from star to star, her lips parted in breathless delight, and a lofty awe radiating from her perfect face as though she watched the flight of seraph hosts from one starry Heaven to another, and through the perfumed air caught far-off strains of celestial choirs.

"Fairy," she said, coming out of her revery, and patting the velvet skin of the snowy doe with her rosy palm, "we like the moonlight sometimes, don't we? when there are no ridiculous Charlies near to talk nonsense and disturb our meditations. Ah, 'mention an angel, and hear the flutter of her wings!' Speak of Charlie and smell his cigar!"

She looked at the approaching form, emerging from the open French window of the dining-room, with a glance curiously compounded of archness and a subtle shade of something not tangible enough to be called melancholy in her great violet eyes.

He came up to the group by the fountain, and, with a droll air of chagrin, seated himself on the marble margin.

"There is something the matter, Charlie!" said Violet Silver, looking at him meditatively; "it's nothing about *that*, is it?"

"It just is!" said Charlie, ruefully; "the governors have been hammer and tongs at it ever since you left the table!" and Charlie groaned, and ran his taper fingers desperately through his crisp brown hair.

"Well," said Violet with spirit, "I suppose *I* am to be consulted in the affair. I wonder at papa," and a great flush swept over face and neck, and stained the pretty hand lying on Fairy's neck.

"You'd wonder twice as much if you had been there," remarked Charlie gloomily. "We're to be married on next Christmas Day, my young lady. I shall be twenty-one then, you know!"

"*What!*" cried Violet; then was silent, her bosom heaving, her eyes flaming, her cheeks like scarlet roses.

"Perfectly true!" said Charlie. "I'm sure I'm sorry as ever I can be, Violet. It's awfully hard on us both, and—and on Daisy too, you know."

"What did papa say?" demanded Violet imperiously. "If you *are* my cousin, I think you are a coward, Charlie Silver!"

"Uncle Arnold held out as long as he could for letting us arrange matters ourselves, but you know my father, Violet! He put on one of those iron looks and uncle gave in at length," replied Charlie dismally; "and you needn't call a fellow names. "I'd like very much to see *you* tell my father that you wouldn't do as he wished."

"Oh!" said Violet, stretching out her round white arm like a young sibyl, her nostrils dilating as though there were the breath of coming war in the air, "*I* am not his daughter, and I am not afraid. If you promise faithfully that you will marry Daisy Leighton, you *shall*, and, yes, Uncle Aurelius shall consent to it, so surely as my name is Violet Silver!"

"Of course I'll promise," said Master Charlie patronizingly. "She's a good little thing, and I'm really very fond of her, or else, Violet, I wouldn't have made any objection to our engagement. But a fellow can't help these things, you know."

"Thank you!" said Violet with superb disdain, and elevating her Spanish nose toward the stars, "you needn't apologize! I can go into a convent or something as soon as you are married, and

"'With my hand on my bosom, my head on my knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.'"

"Oh, come," said Charlie, much aggrieved, "what between you and my father, I wish I was dead or a sailor. I'm as fond of you as though you were my sister, and you turn me into ridicule without mercy. If I were a head taller, and had a black moustache like a monkey-skin muff, like *some* people, it would be different! Though I'm sure I'm driven to such a state that I don't care if I never were to have one!" he added recklessly.

Violet turned very, very pale in the moonlight. She sank down on the ledge of the fountain beside her cousin, and, taking his hand between her soft palms, laid her pretty cheek against it.

"Charlie, dear," she said softly, "you're very fond of me, aren't you?"

"Yes!" said Charlie, considerably mollified, "I am fonder of you than any one, except Daisy, in the world."

"Then you must promise never, never, never to mention the person you know of until I give you leave."

"I promise!" said Charlie Silver; "but, Violet, do you think it's just the thing to meet him the way you do? Nobody knows the fellow."

Violet turned to caress Fairy, and so hid her bright blush from Charlie.

"Never mind, Charlie," she said, with a little quiver in her sweet, young voice; "you *know* I wouldn't do anything wrong?"

"Of course, I know that."

"Very well. Go in and play chess with Daisy, and if they ask you where I am don't tell. Oh, Charlie, you don't know how much depends on papa and especially Uncle Aurelius suspecting nothing!"

"I don't like mysteries," said Charlie majestically, "but as it's *your* secret, Violet, why I must waive a principle and keep it, I suppose!"

"Certainly," said Violet abstractedly, rising from her seat at the fountain, and laying her hand on Fairy's neck, while the fawn gambolled before them, shaking airy peals of silver from her tinkling bells, she tripped away through the moonlight, while Charlie returned to the villa.

He pushed back the foamy lace draperies of the drawing-room window, and stood at the shoulder of a tiny creature, with a zingaree-like face and great melancholy dark eyes, who was sitting on a low ottoman, gazing blankly at the opposite wall, her slender brown hands clasped idly on a heap of glowing roses with which she had been filling a Sevres vase on a marble stand at her side. She was in deep mourning, and looked a pathetic, dark little phantom in the glow and brightness of the pretty room. She heard Charlie's step, and a slight quiver ran through her slender frame, and a dusky rose crept into her lovely face, but she did not turn until he touched her arm very lightly. Then she slowly moved her eyes to his handsome young face. He was very like Violet, only that the brow was hardly so wide, or the outline of the chin at once so firm and delicate. It was a pleasant, lovable face, however, frank and bright as the face of the young should be, but a shadow darkened it as Daisy Leighton's eyes met his. He drew back a little from her, her face was so full of fire, such a tempest of jealous rage lightened in her dilated eyes. She rose, letting the roses fall in a mass to the carpet.

She flung out her little hand, as though appealing against him to the Unseen.

"Coward," she said between her little white teeth, "and traitor! I saw you with her by the fountain."

Charlie's dark-blue eyes assumed a look of mingled anger and distress.

"Upon my word, Daisy!" he said in a low tone, "I am quite tired of these fits of jealousy, and directed against Violet, too. What a silly puss you are!"

She looked at him with a singular smile, her dark face paling to the very lips, and at this stage of the scene a shadow fell across the carpet, and Aurelius Silver stood before them, a stern-looking man, with a face such as one sees on an old Roman medal, and thick masses of sparkling silver hair clustering round his lofty brow. One could imagine him that Roman who gave his son, fresh from a glorious victory, to the sword of the executioner. His eagle eyes took in the agitation of Charlie and Daisy at a glance, but with a piercing look at them, he turned and walked silently away.

Afraid as he was of his terrible father, Charlie had considerable spirit and an affectionate nature. Daisy's emotion distressed him beyond expression, for he dearly loved the fairy little being, and going up to her he took her hand.

"Dearest Daisy," he said gently, "listen to me for one moment." But she tore the little brown fingers from his grasp, and with an inarticulate cry of the excess of rage, sprang through the open window and fled out in the moonlight.

Charlie's first thought was of Violet and his promise to her.

"I hope she won't stumble upon them!" he thought, and darted out to overtake and soothe her, but she had disappeared.

Charlie paused, at a loss how to act,, and, as he looked out across the moonlit lawn, it seemed as though a faint cry came to his ears from the direction of the lake, and at the same moment Violet came swiftly toward him, tall and white as a spirit, in her fluttering, misty dress.

CHAPTER II.

"AU REVOIR!"

Aurelius Silver stalked in an icy rage out into the moonlight, and turned his steps across the lawn, his whole soul filled with intensest wrath, born of the suggestive little scene he had just witnessed between his son and the paid companion of his niece. Just at the point when success had crowned his plans, it was maddening to find his airy fabric of Hope dashed to the ground by the glancing wing of the bright little creature who had flitted so inopportunely across his path. "Why," he said to himself, as his black shadow swiftly traversed the pearly light, bathing the emerald slope of the lawn, "I could crush her with a touch! And yet I foresee as exhausting a conflict with her as with a simoon in the desert, and perhaps as hopeless. Charlie, too! Who would have dreamt it. How indomitable the lad's eyes were as they met mine for that second. A touch of my own nature there!"

A grim smile darkened rather than brightened his majestic face, and he closed his iron lips until the fine curves of the resolute mouth were lost in one firm bar, as unyielding as death itself. "She must be got rid of," he continued silently. "I have never yielded a jot of my will yet to mortal, and it would be strange, indeed, if the folly of a boy and girl should turn me aside from the purpose of my life—that of joining the house and fortune of my brother with my own."

As he pondered, he turned aside from the narrow path, edged with low, aromatic cedars, which ran down to a little grove of willows overhanging the lake, in order that in this quiet spot he might think undisturbed. He was no longer angry, that is, he had taken his rage by the throat and planted his foot upon it after the fashion he had followed with Fate itself in his busy life. He was even a little amused with himself for his brief passion. "One would almost imagine it a thing of consequence," he said to himself; "the poor young fools!" and pushing aside the screen of drooping willow boughs, he was about stepping out on the little beach, glistening golden by the diamond tide, when, as though stung by an adder, he drew back into the impenetrable shade of the clustering leaves, amid which his face gleamed as though hewn from ivory. The crouching monster of his fierce anger was gathering for a spring, and for an instant he was paralyzed by the intensity of his rage. Had it been otherwise, he would immediately have revealed himself, for his haughty spirit would have spurned the idea of spying on the actions of others.

A light canoe trembled on the edge of the tide, partially shaded by the willows, and in it he saw a man, just engaged in pushing it out from the shore. As he looked, it freed itself from the tiny beach, and tossed on the long, purple voiceless swell of the lake. The man turned a dark handsome face, with lustrous eyes to the shore.

"Good-bye, my love!" he said in a low and cautious voice, and Violet Silver kissed both her white hands to him, her deep eyes radiant, her rosy lips quivering yet smiling.

"*Au revoir!* not good-bye," she whispered, "until Christmas Eve. Go! I thought I heard footsteps!"

She turned and fled past Aurelius, her golden hair, loosened and flowing, drifting against his broad chest as he stood aside in the shadow, her light dress touching his hand like a passing vapor.

The man, with a long powerful sweep of his paddle, darted his canoe along the shore, and, turning a sharp curve, bristling with gigantic pines, was instantly lost to sight.

Aurelius drew a heavy breath, which almost seemed to tear the steel muscles of his vast chest, and with the port of a Cæsar defiled by rebellious Helots, parted the screen of willows and stepped out on the fairy beach, baring his lofty brow as he did so to the freshening wind, which was stealing across the lake, leaving pearly footprints of faintest foam as it came. A complication had arisen which, in one glance, he saw could hardly fail of ruining his hopes unless indeed, his action was prompt, vigorous and —unsparing. And of all men who ever tore the golden prize from the hand of Fortune, Aurelius Silver knew how to be unsparing to others and to himself. He had never done a generous deed, far less a dishonorable one. Some natures resemble masses of grim rock, threaded with veins of gold, but to the cold walls of which no tender parasite clings, no vine of beauty connecting them with the warmth and sunshine of human life. He neither gave nor expected sympathy. He had his virtues of the high Roman sort. He was honorable, he was temperate, he was courageous. The hidden fire which lurks in man, as in nature, was there, but it neither brightened his life or that of others.

"So!" he said; "Violet also!"

The expression of his face boded but little good toward the girl. She was the only creature he permitted himself to love, and for the very reason that in a certain cold way she was dear to him, he absolutely hated her in the moment in which he found her young spirit had freed itself from the shackles of his will.

He turned to the left, and walked about a hundred paces along the narrow beach, until the villa hung above him like a pearl set in moss. The strip of sand dwindled here to a mere golden thread, from which sprung the green battlements of the steep bank, or rather hill, on which stood the house of Arnold Silver, and the lake, suddenly deep, lay a depth of jet, dappled with silver at its foot.

Involuntarily Aurelius Silver glanced up at the villa. Against the lights in the drawing-room, beyond the rose garden, the fountain sprang, a pillar of diamond spray, flecked with ruby, and against it again, a little black form rushing down the bank, phantom-like in the moonlight, a night of hair flowing out as she seemed to hurl herself down the steep bank toward the very spot where he stood.

It was Daisy Leighton.

She paused for a brief second, as though poised in air almost above his head, her eyes seeming to roll tides of fire from the veil of her lustrous hair. Her hands stretched out, as though she fled from some pursuing horror.

Then, with a wild cry, throwing for a second her ghastly little face and flaming eyes up toward the silvery glories of the placid heavens she sprang from the banks into the jetty depths at Aurelius Silver's feet, her long hair floated like a mass of ebon-hued drift for a second in the water, and then all was as before, save that widening rings of silver chased each other out across the lake, and drove its waters lapping in sudden life over the belt of sand.

A mighty shudder ran through the vast frame of Aurelius Silver. He was a strong swimmer; what ailed him that even now he made no effort to save the distraught child from the grave she had rushed to?

A voice spoke to his soul, "Oh, man, why trouble thyself? Fate has crushed one obstacle in thy path. Make her evil thy good."

Was there a voice abroad, sighing through the pines and across the purple, silver-crested swells of the lake, sighing over the sudden fall of him who had walked as a god amongst men from the high throne of his boasted honor? Were the stars changed to orbs of fire and blood as his burning eyes turned toward them?

With his silver hair lifting itself, stiffly from his head, with a hand of fire grasping his heart, with eyes that saw and ears that heard not, Aurelius Silver turned and fled by the path which he came.

And silence fell upon the spot.

CHAPTER III.

"LORD, KEEP MY MEMORY GREEN!"

An old stone house standing just outside Montreal, back from the highway and flanked with great pines, old and weird-looking like those in Gustave Doré's picture of the "Hewing of the Cedars for the Temple." The house itself square, massive, low-browed, its hewn walls of granite, with that faint suggestion of rose and aqua-marine flowing through the stone, which renders some of those old buildings so mellow and picturesque. The windows small and formal, the chimneys standing up against the sky, cowled and hooded like hermits on a mountain top, and from the great eaves giant lances of diamond, the handiwork of the fairy armorer King Frost, hanging like the spears of Titans in some enchanted land. A carriage-drive sweeping its hospitable arms from great gates of sombre bronze to the stone steps, guarded on either side by a stone lion couchant, of an amiable, not to say benevolent aspect. A hall-door of polished oak, and over it a richly carved stone, bearing date of nearly a century before.

This was the home of Aurelius Silver, which, with Arnold, his brother, and his niece Violet, he occupied during the winter months, spending his summers at the villa in the Upper Province. Thus the two families were together during the whole year.

Within, on the ground floor, a long, wide room, entered by great arched doors of deep-hued oak, and lighted by a prim row of windows set so deeply in the walls that the sills, cushioned and draped with ruby-hued velvet, formed the coseyest lounging places possible. The walls were panelled with oak, richly

brown and lustrous, tossing to and fro in their shining depths the scarlet leapings and writhings of the great fire burning on the hearth, lordly logs like prostrate pillars of carbuncle, glowing ruddily and filling the room with a rosy illumination. The ceiling was painted with a gorgeously-hued picture of Jove banqueting, squired by a golden-haired Ganymede, while his eagles plumed their pinions at his feet.

A mighty buffet of Spanish oak, a mass of rare carving, and antique enough in appearance to have been taken from the "rich, dim city" which Merlin waved into existence with his wand, bore an array of silver plate, rich, rare and old, catching the firelight on fretted wreath and grinning griffin head, the crest of the family, with fine effect. For the rest, a great dining-table and vast chairs of oak and ruby velvet, a grim portrait or two with the Silver cast of features on the wall, and by one of the windows a fragrant heap of lacey cedar boughs, and Violet in a blue Cashmere dress, twining wreaths of the cedar, a pencil of sunlight striking across her bright head and leaving its heart behind it in that golden toil, straying off and losing itself in the dark oak panel from which that exquisite head was thrown out like a portrait wrought in rose and pearl and gold upon a shield of bronze.

The girl's face was changed in some subtle way since that night we found her by the fountain. A shade more pensive, a thought less radiant, the eyes deeper in expression, the lips parting less readily in laughter and speech; and the same change intensified a hundredfold, repeated in Charlie Silver's face, who, sitting on the cushioned sill by which her chair was placed, watched her in silence as her long, rosy fingers twined the emerald sprays into a long, foamy wreath, flecked here and there with the fire of scarlet berries, dug from beneath the white drifts in the woods.

His face was changed indescribably. The features were sharper, the glance of the eye loftier, if shadowed, the lines of the mouth and chin resolute and decided. The face, which had been like Violet's, had developed into a more gracious resemblance to Aurelius Silver, a likeness which had retained what was finest and noblest in the older face, yet left lacking the cold and tyrannous expression which gleamed jelly in the large and stern eyes of his father. The hair had changed from a warm gold to a deep bronze, and the broad forehead was lined deeply.

Four months previously he had hardly looked his twenty years; now, on the eve of the day which would see him one-and-twenty, he looked ten years older than his age.

"Charlie, how idle you are!" said Violet, breaking a long pause. "Hand me some more sprays, please. There, how do you like my wreath?"

"Very well," said Charlie, obeying the mandate. "What a pretty Idyll of Christmas Eve you make, Violet. You have a gracious beauty about you such as the spirit of the day should have."

"Thanks! I like compliments," said Violet, very sincerely. "You are far better than I am, Charlie, and this wreath is destined to frame our great-grandmother over the chimney-piece. How droll she looks in that powdered wig and brocaded dress, simpering at her woolly flock. What flourishing ideas of Arcadia the dear, innocent souls had!"

She watched him as he drew a dainty set of steps to the hearth, and proceeded to festoon the wreath round the massive old frame of the portrait, with eyes gradually saddening from their arch brightness, and, not wishing him to read their changed expression, she went back to her seat by the window and resumed her task.

"I shall always detest the perfume of cedar!" she exclaimed impatiently, as Charlie seated himself again on the cushioned sill. "Do you know, if Uncle Aurelius hadn't developed such an extraordinary enthusiasm for Christmas decorations, I shouldn't have had the heart to undertake them this year."

"I can imagine that," said Charlie, quietly. "It is very pleasant to know that I shall have some one to think kindly and lovingly of me when I am away. I can quite understand that quaint old prayer, 'Lord, keep my memory green!'"

"Charlie!" said Violet, with startled eyes, "you speak as though you never meant to return from the West! Surely you are not going from us with that idea in your mind? Think of your father."

"My father cannot alter my determination," replied Charlie, "nor does he wish to do so. I shall probably never return to Canada. Dear Violet, I am sorry I told you if it distresses you thus!"

The hot tears fell on the wreath, her hands had dropped on her lap, but she dashed them away and looked at him hopefully.

"Time," she said, "will bring its cure; you are so very young, Charlie!"

"Not too young to keep a memory green," he said, repeating his former words softly, "a sad but dear remembrance." Then his eyes brightened and he went on, "I want work, and this plan of opening a branch of our house in San Francisco will give it to me. After all, Violet, it is a slavish spirit which resigns the *work* of life because of the griefs of it."

"Yes," said Violet, dreamily, "were I a man, so would I think, but it seems to me so cruel for you, Charlie."

Charlie smiled gravely, and lifted his head proudly.

"I am no coward!" he said; "but come, Violet, we will speak no more of this. We have other anxieties in our minds at present, dear!"

"Yes," said Violet, very soberly, "I *almost* tremble."

"Give me the note," said Charlie Silver, rising, "if you have it about you. I had better take it at once."

Violet took from her pocket a little letter, rosy, perfumed, dainty, looked at it lovingly and put her sweet lips to it.

"With my love," she said, blushing shyly, and Charlie proceeded to put it in his pocket-book.

"Good-bye for the present," he said, as he left, "I shall see you before dinner."

"Yes," said Violet, anxiously, "don't disappoint me, dear Charlie."

Charlie smiled and an answering smile rippled over Violet's face, and into her eyes.

"I must go up-stairs and tell Maggie to lay out my white tulle and trim it with holly," she said to herself, after she had been a few moments in the solitude of the stately room.

She got up and, a lovely picture in her tender young loveliness, tripped through the dark arch of the door, out into the great, square hall, with its Christmas draperies of green wreaths, and like the room she had left flooded with crimson light in every nook and cranny from a great fire on a wide hearth in the wall.

Aurelius and Arnold Silver, sitting in the library, one reading, the other smoking, heard a cry which rang through the house, and a heavy fall.

They rushed into the hall and at the foot of the wide staircase lay Violet, like an image of snow, perfectly unconscious, a look of intensest horror frozen on her lovely face.

"I never knew her to faint before," said Arnold Silver, quaking in every limb, as Aurelius lifted her from the ground, and carried her into the dining-room. "My darling! What can have happened?"

"Nothing," said Aurelius, quietly, "because she never has fainted, there is no reason that she should not do so. She has not seemed herself of late."

He laid her very tenderly and gently on a couch, touching her cheek caressingly with his fingers as he did so.

"She is reviving," he said quietly.

CHAPTER IV.

VIOLET'S STORY.

"And so, it being Christmas Eve," said Violet, "and just our own four selves here, I will tell you a story."

It was after dinner. The dessert was on the table, wine flushing redly, a glow of rare exotics in a great silver basket, peaches blushing in dainty Sèvres dishes. A saucy page in the same priceless ware, holding aloft a basket of grapes like amethysts and emeralds, and the firelight and lamplight flowing over all.

The Silvers had drawn from the table and were gathered round the fire, which burned royally as a Christmas fire should, and in its full glow sat Violet, at her father's feet, as Charlie had called her, a lovely Idyll of the season. She was herself again, and the holly berries gleaming in the glossy coronal on her golden head were not more vividly crimson than her cheeks and lips. Her eyes were starry, shining, dilated, wonderful in their rapid changes of expression as she looked from one to the other of the group. She looked at Aurelius Silver, as he sat on the opposite side of the hearth, his noble face and head thrown finely out by the ruby velvet back of the deep chair in which he sat, and she smiled as she spoke. She held in her hand a fan of white feathers, the handle of rubies and dead gold, and when she dropped her head, its shade fell across her face.

"A time-honored custom at Christmas-tide," said her father. "Do you remember, Aurelius, how our poor father and mother used to tell us youngsters Christmas tales, in this very room?"

"I remember?" said Aurelius Silver, quietly.

"And Mère Margaton's tales of the Loup-Garou and Feu-follet, in the nursery?" continued Arnold, "and how frightened I used to be. *You* never feared anything during the whole course of your existence I do believe, Aurelius."

Aurelius Silver started very slightly, and looked at his brother, but in his usual composed tones he said,

"Let us hear Violet's story, by all means. It is not likely to be very fearful, is it, Pussie?"

"No," said Violet, eagerly, "it is a story just about people like ourselves. There could be nothing very fearful about *us* for instance, could there, Uncle Aurelius?"

"No," said Aurelius, smiling strangely, as he looked into the fire. "We are anciently respectable, commonplace people. Far above cause for remorse. Infinitely beyond temptation."

"Go on, Violet," said Charlie, looking curiously at his father, the vibration of whose voice sounded unfamiliar. Indeed of late a certain strangeness had crept into the life of Aurelius Silver, noticeable during the few weeks ushering in the holy Christmas, and which had not escaped the keen young eyes of Violet and Charlie.

Arnold Silver had hitherto been alone in the almost princely generosity, which, at this season especially, had made the name of Silver a word honored and blest amongst the poor of the city, but this year Aurelius had borne his part generously, not appearing in the deeds of mercy himself, but deputing Violet in many cases, his brother in others, as the almoners of his bounty. If possible he was quieter, more reticent than ever, though at times a strange disturbance seemed to reign in his soul, and he would retire from the society of the family, remaining secluded for many hours at a stretch in his library. Who shall say what phantom of remorse sat by his board, visible but to himself? Who shall tell the anguish of such a soul as his, reflecting on the second of temptation which had been sufficient to hurl from its high place of arrogant security that cold and jealous integrity, that stern god honor which he had erected into a deity and bowed the knee to idolatrously? Its crest had towered to the skies, its feet of clay were on the shifting sands. There be no such doughty Iconoclast for your idol of self-security, as temptation; a truth Aurelius Silver had waded through a sea of fire to learn and understand.

How often the hideous memory of that starlit and peaceful night, on which he had fled, as much morally a murderer as Cain, from the lake, returned upon his soul, no one but himself could tell, for the secret was buried, and would for ever remain buried in his own breast. This upas-tree memory had borne some good fruit. When he found Charlie firm as a rock in his determination to remain faithful to the memory of Daisy Leighton, he had not urged him or threatened, or disowned him, as most assuredly he would have once done.

"Wait!" he had said, quietly, "if you retain the same mind at Christmas, I will speak no more to you on the subject. But let the matter rest until then. You are very, very young, and youth is the changeful April time of a man's life. Wait."

And Charlie had waited, but as we have seen, changed not at all.

Through his soul there ever rang an appealing and plaintive voice, "Keep my memory green!"

"Papa!" said Violet, putting her hand on her father's, and turning her wistful eyes to his, "in my story there is a girl, like me, and perhaps you will think her wicked and ungrateful to her father who is just like you, but you will hear all about her quite to the end before you say so. Won't you, dear?"

"If she is like my little girl, she can't be *very* bad," said Arnold Silver, laughing proudly, and patting her pretty hand as it rested on his; "but go on, my dear, we are all anxiety."

Violet clasped her hands on her lap and fixed her eyes musingly on the leaping amethyst and molten gold of the flames licking the great sides of the maple logs on the huge andirons. "About fifteen years ago there were two brothers, partners in a great business, just, papa, as you and Uncle Aurelius are, and one of them had two sons and the other one only little child, a little girl, and the two mothers were dead. Now the elder brother, the father of the two boys, was a strange man, cold and haughty and like iron in everything he said and did, and when his wife died, he was very fond of *her*, Uncle Aurelius, he grew colder and harder, until it seemed as though he had but two aims in life, to heap up wealth and to be known amongst men as of spotless integrity. He did not *seem* to care for his children, though of course that was impossible, because the elder, who was about eighteen, was like the dear mother who had died, and a generous high-spirited lad, and I am *quite* sure all the time the father hardly seemed to know he had a son, he was proud and fond of his boy, only it was not his way to show his heart to the world. And the youngest, a little child of six, was it likely he did not love the little motherless thing dearly? Of course every one here knows how impossible that is," said Violet confidently, "don't we papa?" "I suppose so, Pussie," said Arnold Silver very soberly, and looking straight at the fire. Aurelius was silent, his face a little in the shadow of the jutting marble pillar supporting the chimney-piece. His niece glanced at him and stole her hand into her father's. Her eyes were very bright, her sweet young voice steady and clear as silver as she went on—

"How much that poor man was to be pitied! He was so absorbed in his own business that he had no time to see the evil which was gathering around his elder son, and had he seen it, I don't think he would have moved a finger to save him. Not that he meant to be cruel, you mustn't think that for a moment, but he said and thought that for a truly honorable and upright man there was no such thing as temptation. Those who fell, fell from inclination, and as they fell, so for him, should they lie. So it came about that one day, the proof was brought home to him that his son, the elder one, had forged his name for a trifling sum. Did you speak, uncle?"

"No," said Aurelius Silver, but he had made a sudden movement which had attracted her attention.

"Well, the boy's father quietly turned him adrift, 'to herd,' as he said, 'with the dregs of the earth his crime had levelled him with.' I don't believe he seemed angry even, but none of us can fancy what he felt in his secret soul. He *must* have thought that perhaps if he had acted differently himself, watched and guarded the boy from corrupt influences, this would not have happened, and how, how dreadful that thought must have been! But the boy disappeared."

"And your story ends," said Aurelius Silver, but not looking at her.

"No!" cried Violet," "it has a sequel, Uncle Aurelius, let me go on!"

Aurelius Silver was silent and Arnold turned his cordial face toward him, with a mingled aspect of entreaty and command.

"Let her go on, Aurelius, the sequel is new to us both."

"He went," said Violet, rising and leaning toward her uncle, her voice broken, her cheeks paling and flaming, her eyes fixed on his, "he went to another country, and alone battled for fifteen long and lonely years with the world. He had a great heart, this boy, and it carried him on eagle wings, far above the associations such as they were, of his former life. He acquired wealth, and in the faint hope that his father had forgotten all but that he was his eldest son, he turned his steps homeward. He met his cousin, now a woman grown, how it does not matter, and oh! papa, she was very, very like me, but don't begin to hate her just yet, and he begged that she would try to soften his father toward him, and from one thing to another, the girl and he got to love each other better than all the world. They met very often in secret, though it was the wish of both families that she should marry her young cousin, now a man; and she promised, against he returned from California, where he had to go to look to his affairs, to beg his father to forgive him; but she was such a coward," cried Violet bursting into tears, "as well as such a wicked, deceitful thing to her own father who was the best and dearest in the whole wide world, that she put off speaking until Christmas Eve, and oh! uncle, *you* must finish the story," and Violet flashed into her father's arms, which folded tightly about her, and hid her face amid the ruffles decorating his expansive chest.

"Aurelius Silver," said Arnold, solemnly, as Violet trembled in his arms, "I charge you to finish it as your heart and conscience urge you to do. Reflect where the chiefest fault lay."

A peculiar smile, gracious yet shadowed, crossed the lofty face of Aurelius Silver. He rose and came toward them.

"Doubly my daughter!" he said, taking Violet into his arms, and kissing her pure, young brow, "the good Angel of this Christmas Eve. You shall finish your Christmas tale as you will."

"Papa dear," cried Violet, "tell me that you don't hate me dreadfully, but I couldn't help it, indeed I couldn't!"

"I'll get over it in time, Pussie," said Arnold with twinkling eyes. "I've known it all along. But come, let us see Aurelius the younger."

"Did *you* know of this?" queried Aurelius Silver turning to Charlie as Violet fled, rosy as Aurora, with smiles and blushes into the hall.

"Yes," said Charlie, simply, "but it is only of late I knew that Violet's lover is my brother."

She came back clinging to his arm, a man with dark, lustrous eyes and the kingly port of the Silvers, but with a face all his own and his dead mother's. She left him, however, and stood by her father, and Aurelius, looking steadfastly at him, clasped his outstretched hand in his and held it in a firm grasp. "You are welcome!" he said, and still holding it turned to his brother.

"Arnold," he said, "where is your welcome?" "Here!" said Arnold Silver, taking Violet's rosy hand and placing it in his nephew's, "one more expressive than words. But no California, remember. I cannot part from her."

"A good gift!" said Aurelius Silver musingly. "Charlie, she might have been yours. Your brother is leaving us," he said turning to his elder son, "on account, as perhaps you are aware, of a certain sad event dating some four months back?"

"I have heard of it," said the young man in a tone of quiet, yet heartfelt sympathy, and Violet's pretty head drooped sadly. She had no spell to dissolve the trouble which was to darken the whole of that young life.

"Violet," said her uncle, after a moment's pause; "as Charlie's promised bride, I bought you a set of jewels, as the betrothed of my son Aurelius I should like to clasp them on you."

"Thank you, uncle," said Violet, and as he left the room, she went up to Charlie, and looked at him with sad eyes.

"This Christmas has held nothing for you," she said, "it is very sad."

"Except a darling sister and brother," said Charlie, clasping her hands in his.

"And wife!" said the voice of Aurelius Silver behind them.

They turned their faces to him, in a silence born of awe. A pallid silence through which Violet's voice rang out in wild exultation.

"Daisy! Oh, Charlie, this was the ghost I saw to-day!"

Aurelius Silver stood towering like some lofty column, crested with sparkling snow, and by his side a dark, and beautiful little creature, whose wide and speaking eyes were fixed on Charlie's face.

"Take her," said Aurelius Silver smiling, "she is yours. That night when she fell into the lake it was my fortune to save her young life. I had her brought here in order to test the real strength of your affection for her, determined that she should be yours if I found you true to her memory on this day. Charlie!" he said abruptly, with a sudden change of voice, "no more of this idea of leaving me. I am old, and I wish my children about me. Will my Christmas gift bind you to your home?"

Charlie's answer need not be recorded, suffice it to say that in the happy silence which succeeded it, the silvery clock on the chimney-piece rang out twelve!

"See!" said Violet Silver, as the last stroke died away, "it is Christmas morning."

And in the dawning of that gracious day we will leave them.

No one ever knew the fearful temptation which for a second had mastered Aurelius Silver, and no one ever knew, except him, that Daisy had not fallen into the lake by the merest accident, no, not even her husband.

No one knew how potent the bitter experience of that night had been in stirring the soul of Aurelius Silver to its depths, or how the latent fire of human sympathy and affection burned so late but so warmly in his soul.

☞ A Connecticut farmer secreted himself in his hen-coop to see what became of his poultry, and he caught the landlord by the hair about midnight. Landlord claimed to be drunk, and gave the man $20 to prove it.

☞ An Eastern Virginia farmer recently plowed up the remains of an "ancient mariner," encased in a birch-bark coffin, which had been protected from decay by a thick coating of coal-tar. Some silver coins of the time of Queen Anne were found upon the body.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

STORM AND COLD IN THE WEST.—The telegraph has brought us many distressing reports of the fatal results of the storm of snow accompanied by intense cold which swept over the Northwest last week, and the mail of the last two or three days from that section contains accounts of other disasters of which no intelligence had reached us. It is probable that several hundred persons were frozen to death in Minnesota, Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas while the storm raged. Most of these were men who were upon the prairies when the snow began to fall, sometimes with their teams and sometimes on foot, and perished before they could reach places of refuge. The people of the East will have good reason to remember the severity of the present winter; but in the West the unprecedented cold and the tremendous snow-fall have made such havoc with human life, that what we have suffered here seems hardly worthy to be spoken of in comparison with that which has been endured by the inhabitants of that distant section.

FUNERAL OF THE EX-EMPEROR NAPOLEON.—The funeral of the ex-Emperor Napoleon took place at Chiselhurst, England, January 15th. His son attended as chief mourner, but his wife was too ill to leave the house. Prince Napoleon, M. Rouher, and a large number of distinguished French and English characters were present and participated in the ceremonies. At least thirty thousand persons witnessed the funeral procession from the house to the chapel. There was no sermon over the remains, and the services were brief and impressive. The body will rest in a mortuary receptacle until removed to France for final interment, which will be permitted by the government under certain restriction.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN SOONGHUR.—Very promptly does the new year, apparently, begin to unload its freight of great disasters. Late dispatches bring a report from Bombay, *via* London, that a terrible earthquake had occurred at Soonghur (a town of India, in a detached district of the Baroda dominions, 114 miles north of Bombay, and 46 miles south of Surat,) by which 1,500 persons are said to have been killed in the town alone. Nothing has been heard from the surrounding country, where, it is feared, the disaster may also be severe. The date of this supposed catastrophe is not given, and the uncertainty of other details may, perhaps, encourage the hope that the report of its extent has also been exaggerated.

MRS. SHERMAN, who on Saturday, Jan. 11th, was sentenced to imprisonment for life at New Haven, has made a confession in which she acknowledges having killed eight persons, the probability being that she has also killed some others. Her confession, which is a very long and rambling statement, is certainly one of the most remarkable lists of cold-blooded murders ever given to the public.

☞ An eccentric, but benevolent Danbury man, hearing that several thousand working girls lost their all by the Boston fire, shipped them sixteen volumes of Patent Office Reports.

☞ A woman in Wayne county, Ind., lately captured a live, full-grown and decidedly ugly wolf.

☞ A Trenton, N. J., woman posted a letter in a fire-plug, under the impression that it was a mail-box.

☞ Close-fisted persons who have already died and had their bodies embalmed by the old method, will feel bad when they learn that a California undertaker has discovered a new and less expensive process, whereby dead bodies can be embalmed without the aid of chemicals. Those who have tried the new process say it supplies a long-felt want—they will have no other.

☞ A Pennsylvania father has consigned his son to the House of Refuge for marrying without his consent.

☞ Louisville found a man frozen into the ice so solid that it took a whole day to thaw him out of the cake, and then took another day for the coroner to get into his pockets.

☞ A New York genius tried to blow the snow off from his house-top with nitro-glycerine. His shingling bill came to sixty-eight dollars.

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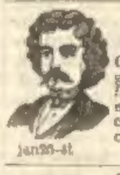

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THE SORROWS OF A SERENADING LOVER.

A few nights ago, a gentleman of this city was going home at a somewhat late hour, when he heard in the distance sweet strains of music, or, at least, what he at first supposed to be music, but which proved to be, principally, "straining" and other dismal sounds that seemed to come from a bosom racked with anguish, or a stomach overloaded with green fruit. Softly he drew near, and at last discovered whence the sounds proceeded. A youth, over whose upper lip the barber could not have slipped the back of his razor blade more than twice, stood leaning against the gate-post, with his eyes fixed upon a chamber window in the second story of the house before him. In his hands he held a guitar, upon which he picked with the air of one who is not certain he is on the right string, while from his parted lips came the following song:—

I have lo-hoved tha-he Zula Zo-hoog,
Fo-hor th-hy life was all sa-hang;
Wa-wa has all a cha-heer-ful smi-ile;
Wa-wa has su-hunshine all the while.

Here the young man paused to spit and fill up again with wind, and then struck into the chorus:

Oh, Zu-hula, moulder-hing Zu-hula,
Si-hilent is thy silver so-houg;
Oh, Zu-hula, da-harling Zu-hula,
De-hear departed Zu-hula Zong-ong-ong.

The singer here took a rest of a few seconds, looked anxiously down the street to see that no policemen were in sight, then throwing a peculiar plaintive sound into his voice, he sang:

When the mo-hoon is shi-hi-ning o'er the la-la-hake,
Oh, tha-hen I'll think of thee-he-he-thee,
Oh, tha-hen, oh-h, tha-he-hen I'll thi-hi-hi-ink of
thee-ee-ee!

Here the front door being suddenly opened, a sepulchral voice said, "Sick him, Tige!" and out bounced a dog about the size of a flour barrel and with a good set of natural teeth. The singer turned a back somersault out of the gate, and with the dog nipping at his coat-tail at every jump, disappeared down toward the heart of the city. Hereupon the gentleman who was a witness to this serio-comic drama turned and left the spot, but not until he had seen a middle-aged man in a single garment, with an abbreviated narrative, rolling over in hall-way, convulsed with mirth, and saying, whenever he stopped laughing long enough to say anything, "Oh-the-hen—Oh the hen I'll think of thee!" The gentleman had walked several squares from where the scene occurred, passing a broken guitar that lay on the edge of the gutter, when he met the dog returning with a wild expression in his eye, and a pair of suspenders and a portion of a coat-tail in his mouth.—*Bowling Green (Ky.) Democrat.*

ECCENTRICITIES OF GENIUS.

The *Sunday Dispatch*, commenting upon the eccentricities of various great writers, says:—

"Young, the poet, composed his 'Night Thoughts' with a skull before him. Ennius, Æschylus, and Cato, all got their inspiration while drinking. Dryden used to take physic before setting himself to compose a new piece. Kant, the German philosopher, while lecturing, had the habit of fixing his attention upon one of his auditors who wore a garment without a button in a particular place. Byron drank brandy while composing. Governor Geary always fed himself on toasted cheese while writing his famous tragedies. General Collis's most remarkable poems were written while sitting upon a warm stove. George Alfred Townsend never writes but when he has the nightmare. This accounts for the peculiarities of his style. James M. Scovel's finest sermons were composed while the author was climbing a tree. Mr. Vaux wrote his well-known treatise on the origin and history of conundrums entirely upon second-hand paper collars. The editor of this journal cannot write unless his brain is maddened with copious draughts of ice water. We compose best when the office boy stands at our side and prods us in the leg with a hay-fork or a pair of warm shears. These are some of the peculiarities of great men. Let the youth of the country learn from these examples how immortality can be gained. Our office-boy can be engaged, for a small sum, by any aspiring person who wishes to be prodded with a hay-fork."

TRIBUTE TO AN EDITOR.

Some one recently charged a Titusville editor with depicting, in too extravagant language, the personal peculiarities of the editor of a St. Louis paper; whereupon the man of Titusville explains his views in the following touching and tasteful paragraph:

"As for grossly exaggerating the deformities of the editor of the 'Globe,' we have as yet only touched upon his minor defects of person. We have not yet given publicity to the fact that he is near-sighted and long-nosed, so much so that he cannot write with a pencil, for he is compelled to hold his head so near the paper that his proboscis wipes out every word as soon as written. We have not alluded to the wart on the bridge of his nose, nor the button-hole in his upper lip by which he buttons the latter up over his nose, using the wart for a button, thus sparing his moustache when he eats soup. We have not mentioned the wen on one side of his head, which is so large it is frequently mistaken for the real head, and Kaine always has to ask his wife if he has got his hat on the right knob before leaving home."

There is such refinement and elegance about this tribute to his friend, that we begin again to have hope of the mighty future of American journalism.

MISFORTUNE TO A PLUMBER.

There are some disadvantages in living on a second floor. A Danbury housewife thus situated, left a bar of soap on the stairs while she exchanged a few words with the first floor tenant, and a plumber who was upstairs mending the pipes, came down a moment later with several tongs and wrenches in one hand, and a sheet iron furnace in the other, and when he reached the immediate locality of the soap, his legs suddenly spread apart, a look of astonishment stole into his face, and in an instant his head was through the front door, and his coat-tail on fire, and those tongs and wrenches were laid up in the air struggling for dear life with that sheet iron furnace. He says now that his father forced him to learn the trade of plumbing, and that it was not his own choice.

MR. G. W. BASSETT AND HIS DIAMOND PIN.

Mr. George Washington Bassett is a good-looking young printer, with an average quality of brains. His brains run on diamond pins. For some months past he has been in the habit of wearing an immense pin, backed with tin foil, which was worth about fifteen cents, and exhibited all the colors of the rainbow. On Saturday night Mr. Bassett visited a saloon up town. His pin accompanied him. When Mr. Bassett started for home some gentlemen followed him. They plugged him in the back of the head with a sand club, knocked him as stiff as a mackerel, and ruined his elegant shirt in tearing the fifteen-cent diamond pin from his bosom. Mr. Bassett is now in bed, with a fair prospect of remaining there until his doctor's bill covers the expense of a real diamond pin.—*Exchange Paper.*

☞ Chicago is all excitement over a man who plays billiards with his nose instead of a cue. He chalks the somewhat prominent organ, and then pushes the ball about the table by means of a series of collisions. He has succeeded in making a run of nine points.

A BURIED LOVE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GLEN CAROL.

My life hath been a stormy day,
And will not end too soon. The night
Will close around with scarce a star
To cast its pitiful light
Along the path that I must tread
So soon—the end is near, at last,
The end of this wild fever-dream,
Vivid with phantoms of the past.

And years with noiseless steps have passed
Since that bright vision on me burst!
Earth held not any fairer shrine
Than that at which I worshipped first.
Through the long hours of the night,
And when the lamp burns low and dim,
The shadow comes—and bends above,
And whispers of what might have been.

Until my brain seems growing wild;
And all these years of misery
Seem blended in one dreadful hour—
The hour that parted *her* from *me!*
Still on the night-air walls the cry
That told a heart-string snapped in twain—
Still, turned to me, imploringly,
I see that face, so pinched with pain.

It seemed not hers—but as a flower
Shrunken and chilled in autumn rain.
Oh! God, be pitiful to her
Who lives, and loves me, now as *then!*
She lives—and only this I know—
She lives, and wears upon her hand
The emblem of a buried love,
That we alone may understand.

Oh! earth, thou holdest many graves—
But never one so wide and deep
As that within this *heart* of mine,
Where I have laid my dead to sleep!

"Only A Flirtation."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

(CONCLUDED.)

Another week passed away—a week of strange loneliness to Emily Dalrymple. Victor Ainslie's departure had left a void in her heart greater than she liked to acknowledge to herself. She did not love him, she thought—she never could love any one but Arthur Dalrymple—and yet she would have given half her fortune for one more look at that beautiful boyish face, for a sound of that well-remembered voice.

One sultry noontide, as she returned to the hotel from a solitary ramble, she heard strains of the wildest, sweetest music floating from the open windows. Entering the hotel, she saw the musician—a tall, pale youth, with long brown curls floating down to his shoulders, leaning carelessly against the wall, surrounded by a group of admiring listeners. When Miss Dalrymple entered the room he bowed and smiled, then held his violin with a firmer hand, and filled the air with enchanting melody. It was Victor Ainslie; but so thin and pale and care-worn that Emily scarcely recognized him. His eyes gleamed brighter than ever before, and the hectic spots dyed his hollow cheeks, when he saw before him the woman he loved. He seemed to throw his whole soul into the instrument; it sang a wonderful song of joy and thanksgiving and love. As she listened, the girl thought of tinkling rivulets amid verdant hills, of the songs of happy birds, of the chimes of silvery bells, while through all seemed to run the cadence of a tender voice in notes of praise and gladness. Presently this changed into a sad, slow, mournful air, more melancholy than the sighing wind, or the moaning of the restless sea. It seemed like the wailing of a lost soul. Miss Dalrymple shuddered, and turned to leave the room. In an instant the music ceased, and Ainslie was at her side.

"Let us take a stroll," he said, "I must see you once more—alone—before I die."

"We will walk down to the beach, if you wish," answered Emily with a strong feeling of pity and remorse in her bosom. Ainslie's face grew bright for a moment.

"I never intended to see you again," he said, as they passed out of the village and down toward the sea," "but I did not know the strength of my love, the weakness of my will. I cannot live away from you, Emily, Let me be near you till I die—It will not be long."

"Have you no pride, no dignity? It is unmanly thus to urge a hopeless suit," said the girl, hoping to arouse her lover from his apathetic condition.

"I am not urging my suit, Emily; I will never do that. Your lover is my true friend, and I would not take you from him if I could. But you remember the poem I read to you:

"'Although thou mayst never be mine,
Although even hope is denied,
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in this world beside.'

"It is sweet to love you, Emily, even hopelessly; to look upon your beautiful face. You promised to be my friend always; I will be satisfied with that. Forgive me, and I will never speak of love to you again."

Victor smiled, and pressed his hand to his bosom. A spasm of coughing shook his slender frame. Emily turned away her head to hide her tears.

"Look at those clouds," resumed Victor, presently, pointing to the dark masses that were rapidly filling the sky. "There will be a terrible storm before night."

The air was ominously hot and still. The ocean lay in a dead calm. The gulls flew screaming shoreward. The clouds grew denser and darker every moment. Suddenly a bright flash leaped from the lowering sky to the sea, and was followed by a loud peal of thunder.

"Let us go back at once, Victor; the storm will be upon us in a moment," exclaimed Emily.

"God pity the poor fellows at sea," said Ainslie. "There will be a furious gale; look at those masses of inky, broken clouds; I hear the roar of the wind even now. What is that yonder? Great heaven! it is a boat, and the man on board is bending desperately to the oars. He must have been mad to venture out at such a time. He will never reach the shore alive."

Miss Dalrymple looked eagerly at the tiny craft, which was shooting swiftly toward them. There was something familiar in the man's figure, and in the way he handled the oars. Presently he paused a moment, and waved his handkerchief to them. Emily turned pale, and uttered a cry of terror.

"Oh, Victor!" she cried, grasping her companion's arm, "it is my Cousin Arthur. He has rowed across from the village on the point—it is the nearest way. Can he reach the shore, do you think, before the storm breaks?"

"I fear not, Emily. The wind will strike the ocean before another minute."

"Oh, Heaven! then he will certainly be drowned. A boat cannot live through such a gale as this, and Arthur cannot swim."

While the girl was speaking, the storm burst over sea and shore in all its fury. For a few moments the wind blew with awful force; then the rain came down in torrents, and the pealing thunder and the roaring sea joined in a deafening concert. Blinded by the vivid lightning and the driving rain, Victor Ainslie and Miss Dalrymple sank down together on the sands, while the terrible storm raged over and around them.

The gale, however, was as brief as it was violent. In a little while the wind lulled, the darkness abated, although the rain still fell and the thunder roared overhead. As soon as she could see, Miss Dalrymple sprang to her feet and gazed out over the water which had lately been so calm and sunny, but where the waves were now running almost mountains high, and breaking in fury along the beach almost at her feet. The solitary boatman was not to be seen. Sick at heart, Emily turned away and buried her face in her hands.

TAKING IT FOR GRANTED.

Engaging Photograper—"Just look a little pleasant, Miss! Think of *him!*"

"Oh, God, he is dead!" she moaned. "My noble, beautiful Arthur, I shall never see you again!"

Victor, scarcely less grief-stricken than the girl, did not attempt to comfort her, but kept his eyes fixed on the boiling, foaming waves. A hundred feet, perhaps, from the shore he saw a dark object, which he knew to be the overturned boat; and clinging to this, rising and falling with the rolling billows, was the figure of a man, with his white, ghastly face turned toward the shore.

"Do not give up to despair, Emily," he said. "Arthur Dalrymple still lives. You can see him yonder, clinging to the boat; and I will save him, or lose my life in the attempt."

By this time several of the villagers came running down to the shore, among them two or three brawny fishermen.

"Eh, sir, we ferred you and the lady was drownded," said one of the latter. "What in the world kept you out in all this fearful gale? You must be crazy, boy."

"Do you see that poor fellow out there?" answered Ainslie, pointing to the dark form struggling with the waves, and clinging desperately to the frail shell which was his only hope.

"Good Lord!" exclaimed the fisherman. "Poor fellow, he will have to go down. No boat could live a minute in such a sea, even if any one was fool-hardy enough to go out in her."

"Hush!" said Victor, in a low tone. "That drowning man is this lady's sweetheart. He shall not die while I have any life and strength left to save him. Have you got a rope long enough to reach that far?"

"Bill, bring that rope of yourn here," said the fisherman to one of his companions. "Lucky we brought it along, though we didn't expect to use it. 'Taint no use for you to try to swim out there, youngster. The stoutest feller here couldn't keep up against them waves, and you look as weakly as a gal."

"Fasten the rope around my waist," answered Victor, sternly. "If I reach that poor fellow; you can pull us both ashore; if I do not, it will not matter to me; I have no one to mourn my death."

Giving one glance at Miss Dalrymple's beautiful, tearful face, the young man leaped boldly into the foaming waves, and commenced fighting his way toward his drowning rival. Sometimes he sank beneath the angry billows, but he soon reappeared, and slowly but surely neared the goal.

"Lord, how the boy swims," said one of the fishermen, admiringly. "I didn't think he had strength enough to get ten feet from shore, but I do believe he's going to reach that poor chap."

Miss Dalrymple crouched on the sands, speaking no word, but from her heart went up an agonized prayer for the safety of those two who were so dear to her.

At last Victor reached the boat, just as Arthur Dalrymple, exhausted and insensible, relaxed his hold and was sinking beneath the waves.

"Hooray!" yelled the fisherman who held the rope. "He has reached that poor feller just in time to save him from a watery grave. Pull in, boys—steady—we will save them both yet."

A few moments later, the sturdy fishermen lifted the two forms from the water, and carried them out of the reach of the waves. Dalrymple was insensible, but he was not dead. He soon recovered his senses, although he was still too weak to stand. Ainslie, who had been strangled for a time by the waters, sprang to his feet as soon as the men released him.

"Emily, I have saved your lover; you can be happy with each other still," he said, turning to Miss Dalrymple, who knelt at her cousin's side, sobbing with joy.

"Oh, Victor!" cried the girl, "yours is the noblest heart that ever beat in human bosom."

The young man attempted to reply, but one of those fits of coughing which had been so frequent of late, choked his utterance. Suddenly the blood gushed from his mouth in a crimson stream; he reeled, and fell to the ground senseless. He had burst a blood-vessel, and his life was ebbing rapidly away.

He was borne tenderly to the village, where medical aid was summoned; but he was already beyond the reach of human skill. The hemorrhage was checked for a time, and the young man returned to consciousness; but the vital forces were nearly spent, and the physician saw at once that his days were numbered.

Miss Dalrymple was with her cousin, talking over his narrow escape from an untimely death, when the physician entered the room.

"Mr. Ainslie wishes to see you a moment, Miss Dalrymple, alone," he said, gravely.

"Can he live, doctor?" asked Emily, with faltering voice.

"Ere the sun sets, his spirit will be in the presence of its Maker," answered the physician.

With tearful eyes and aching heart, Emily entered the room where the young man lay, pale and motionless as a corpse. A smile of strange sweetness overspread his face, as he strove to hold out his thin, transparent hands.

"Oh, Emily, you have come!" he whispered; "I could not die till I looked once more on your beautiful face. Will you kiss me once, my darling—for the first time and the last?"

Miss Dalrymple knelt by the bed, sobbing aloud.

"Oh, Victor, I love you, I love you!" she cried. "I know it now that it is too late—I love you as I shall never love another—I, who have sent you to your death!"

"Oh, Heaven, this happiness more than repays me for all I have suffered," he gasped. "Kiss me, Emily, my sweet—just once—before—I—die!"

She stooped and pressed a kiss on the pale, cold lips. A moment later, the beautiful face which she baptised with her tears was the face of the dead.

Emily Dalrymple is a wife to-day, and people, looking at her calm, saintly face, call her happy. Perhaps she is. But there is a lonely grave by the sea-shore which she often visits, and over which she trains the rose and the myrtle. And that grave holds the mortal remains of her boy-lover, Victor Ainslie.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

H. B., (Dayton, Iowa,) asks: "Please answer me one question. What was the full amount of popular votes polled for each, Grant and Greeley?" There were polled for Grant 3,579,583 votes; for Greeley 2,843,086; making Grant's majority 736,498.

LOVER OF POST, (Tremont, Pa.), writes: "Please answer this question as soon as possible:—A young man studying for the Catholic ministry wishes me to find for him a place in a Protestant seminary. He, although studying at present to be a priest, disbelieves in Catholicity, and is convinced, he says, of its groundlessness. He is poor, and cannot pay his way, or he would enter into a Protestant seminary at once. I therefore desire you to answer the following question:—Where can the person I refer to go, so as to pursue his career in the way he wishes and believes?" We do not know of any such institution organized on a free basis. If any reader can furnish us the information desired, we shall be happy to publish it.

H. B. M., (Greenwood), writes: "Be so kind as to tell me what kind of frame will suit the Chromo style best, and for what sum I could get one in Philadelphia? 2nd. Can you inform me in what years the steam-vessels President and City of Glasgow were lost? and on which one the Rev.—Reynoldson, the distinguished Baptist preacher, lost his life? Controversies have taken place in this neighborhood on the subject, and if anybody can settle the question it is you, Mr. Post, for I believe you can satisfy any questioner, on any subject. 3rd. What is your opinion of a married man setting up and contending that woman's work is nothing? Don't you think it is a pity he did not find out their non-account before he determined to tie himself to one for life, or do you think he believes what he says himself? I know this much, he is very fond of good eating, and nothing puts him in a better humor than to set him down to a well filled table of everything nice; thanks to the industry and good management of his good, better, best of wives. And it is then he begins on the poor women, and when he does begin! I feel like—well, I don't know what,—like clipping his wings a little, so he couldn't fly so high. Just please you do it for me, for I know your high appreciation of the female sex." 1st. It depends entirely on the color, size and shape of your chromo. There is a very great variety of square frames, suited for this purpose, ranging in price from one or two dollars upwards, according to size and finish. 2d. City of Glasgow in 1854, President in 1841. We do not know in which the person named was lost. The dates may aid you in settling the controversy. 3d. Considering your high appreciation of our efforts, we would like to settle that ungrateful gentleman for you, but fear he belongs to that cantankerous kind who will not stay settled. Of course he does not believe what he says; or, to take the only other alternative, he does not know what he is talking about. Why does not his wife cut off his buckwheat cakes and coffee, and set him down to dry bread and water till he surrenders at discretion? If he still holds out, after this strong argument, his wife had better take his tools and try her hand at his work, and leave him to perform hers. We imagine that, by the day's ending, there would be two badly disenchanted individuals. One would know by aching arms what man has to perform, and be by weary limbs and distracted brain the work and worry of women. If he will not accept this test, let him talk. It will do you no harm, and may do him good to let off steam.

OLIVE B., (Monmouth, Ill.,) writes: "As I am a reader of the Post, will you please answer me a few questions? 1st. Is it injurious to the teeth to clean them with a brush? 2d. Does it injure the hair to sleep with a cap? 3d. Should you advise a girl to wear her coarse calf-skin shoes to church in preference to thin ones in winter? 4th. Is it wicked to pierce the ears? If so, who first invented it? 5th. Is it injurious for young girls to wear corsets? 6th. How often should a healthy person eat? 7th. How old was Shakspeare when he was married? 8th. What are the ages of Ida and Gabrielle Greeley? 9th. What do you think of my writing, for a miss of fourteen?" 1st. It is not usually considered injurious. It is certainly more injurious not to clean them. 2d. We have no reason for supposing it does. A silk cap is said, by some, to be beneficial to the hair. 3d. We certainly should. Wearing thin shoes in cold or damp weather, is a direct invitation to sickness to pay you a visit. Health is of far more importance than appearance—but thin shoes do not even *look* well in bad weather. 4th. There is no harm involved in it. In our opinion ear-rings often improve the looks of thin-faced ladies. Eve, or one of her daughters, perhaps, first wore them. 5th. If we may take the verdict of physicians and common sense, tight lacing is exceedingly injurious—but corsets need not be laced tightly. 6th. Two or three times a day, and no oftener, if he wishes to continue healthy, unless when the days are long and labor hard. 7th. He was married in his nineteenth year—too young for a judicious choice, and he lived to repent it. 8th. Gabrielle is nearly of age—and Ida a few years past her majority. 9th. It is good for your age.

G. G. (Gallipolis, Ohio), writes: "What think you of hasty opinions, which often result in petty disputes that often arise in large families, as a means of drawing them out and thinking for themselves? Don't you think that they will finally learn to quarrel and cause what 'Zig' calls family jars?" They certainly lie open to that objection. We are opposed to hasty opinions on any subject, and strive to avoid them ourselves; though sometimes it is difficult, in the multiplicity of questions which crowd upon us. It is always best to think twice before speaking once, for these disputes about trifles, though little things in themselves, often wedge themselves between hearts that should be firmly joined by affection, and have perhaps as much to do with family differences as any greater cause.

X. Y. Z. (Erie, Pa.), asks: 1st. "How and when did the custom of giving Christmas gifts originate? 2d. Why is a hard-burnt brick heavier than a soft one? Both were of the same weight before burning. 3rd. It is asserted by persons having charge of sawmills, and other machinery propelled by water, that the power of water is greater in the night than in the daytime. Is this a fact? If so explain it. 4th. When and how did the expression 'Take French Leave' originate? 5th. Whence originated the term 'Grass Widow' as applied to married women whose husbands have left them?" 1st. The custom of adding to the pleasure of holiday seasons by the presentation of gifts is of the greatest antiquity. It, probably, in no case originated at any fixed period, but grew up, as many popular customs have done, from gradual accretion, so that at our first knowledge of the observance we find it full-grown. The habit of making gifts about the time of the New Year originated long centuries before the Christian period, and was doubtless originally intended to celebrate the apparent return of the sun. 2d. We do not know that it is. The longer it is burned the more moisture is driven from the clay, hence the hard burned brick should be the lightest. This cause, however, increases its powers of absorption, and it may in damp weather absorb sufficient moisture to more than make up for the difference in weight. 3d. No. The power of falling water has nothing to do with darkness or daylight. The effect alluded to probably arises from a simple cause, not considered by the parties. Generally at night the water is not much used, hence it accumulates in the mill-races. Any one turning it on at night has thus a greater head to operate with, hence an increase of power. 4th. The phrase is explained in English works as originating in the habits of the French soldiers, whose custom was, in their invasions, to take what they wanted without asking leave or permission, or offering pay. It is defined as taking without leave. Another explanation given is that in the informal parties in Paris it was the custom to depart without a formal leave-taking. Hence, the term French leave. This explanation, though more in accordance with the use of the phrase in this country, is not considered correct. 5th. It means Grass Widow, widow by courtesy. It was originally applied to an unmarried woman who had had a child, but it now bears the meaning which you give.

A SCHOOLGIRL, (Lexington, Kentucky,) writes: "My father having been a subscriber to your paper for over thirty-five years, and I having been a constant reader of its valuable columns ever since I have been old enough to appreciate them, I now take the liberty of asking you a question about which I have felt some curiosity. I have been reading Tennyson's poem, 'The Lotus Eaters.' Now please tell me what Lotus Eaters are, as I do not know." The Lotus Eaters are the Lotophagi described in Homer's Odyssey. This was the name of a people said to inhabit a country to which Ulysses was carried, while trying to double Cape Malea, in the Peloponnesus. According to the legend, those who ate of the lotus at once forgot friends and country, and wished only to remain in the land of the Lotophagi. On this idea Tennyson constructed his poem.

H. W. R., (Pottsville, Pa.,) asks: "What is the origin of 'Giving the mitten?'" We are not aware of the date or circumstances of its origin, and, so far as we can discover, these are not known. The idea seems to be when the hand is asked for, to offer the glove or mitten instead, as a hint that the hand itself is not obtainable.

A. B. (Oak Grove,) writes: "Please be so kind as to tell me the price of 'Ebb Tide,' by Christian Reid, also that of 'Companions of my Solitude,' by Arthur Helps. Say if you can send them by mail." Ebb Tide is worth $1.00 in paper, $1.50 in cloth. Companions of my Solitude $2.50 They can be sent by mail.

SADIE, (Indianola, Iowa,) writes: "I am a constant reader of the dear old Post. It has been taken in our family for at least eighteen years, and now I come to you for a little bit of advice on the same old subject, which the ladies, (and for that matter the gentlemen too) bother you so much about, viz: love affairs. But waiving further preliminaries I will proceed to business. A very respectable and worthy young man succeeded in winning my affections and made a proposal of marriage. He is a farmer and lives about thirty miles from here. I told him I would give him my answer the next time he came to visit me. He said it was all right; but the next time he came he did not mention the subject at all. In the meantime I understood he was waiting on another girl. When next he came to see me I told him what I had heard, and he did not deny it, but said he had concluded not to marry any one. I accused him of trifling—he had been paying attentions to me for a year—and he said he saw nothing wrong in his conduct. Do you think it right for a man to win the love of a confiding girl, and then, without any explanation whatever, tell her he don't intend to marry? Now what am I to do? Shall I send him *where the woodbine twineth*, or let him continue his visits when I know that he is going with another girl? Don't you think there is an explanation due me? I don't believe in pining or whining about any faithless swain, do you? I have not the time to indulge in such luxuries. Besides I think by his conduct he has proved himself unworthy of any true lady. What shall I do?" We scarcely like to advise in such a case—for, if you did not like him a great deal, in spite of all, you probably would have declined receiving any further visits at once. Doubtless he took offence at not obtaining an immediate answer to his proposal. In a strict view, he was not bound to keep his proposal open for a future acceptance or rejection. A pledge requires that both parties should be held by it. If you did not feel sufficiently assured of your feelings to accept him at once—the consent of your parents being taken for granted—then you did perfectly right to ask for time. But we do not see that you can blame him for receding upon further thought from his offer. For he may have reasoned, I was mistaken as to her loving me—it is all a matter of calculation with her—and if I had known this before, I would not have made the offer. Therefore our counsel is, if you really like the man, and he is a suitable person for you to marry, to let his visits go on, and say nothing further to him about what has passed. All that relative to the other lady, is doubtless mere rumor. Consider that both of you have probably blundered, let bygones be bygones, and take a fresh start. If anybody else comes along that you like better, accept him; and if your old lover takes fresh heart, and asks again, say "yes, and thank you," on the spot.

D. W., (Grove, O.,) asks: "Please tell me the meaning of the word Trencher. Our dictionary says, a wooden platter, but it seems to have a different meaning sometimes." That is the original meaning of the word, though in use it gradually acquired a more extended signification, being used to signify the table, the food, &c. A trencher-companion is a companion of the pleasures of the table.

M. W., (of T.) We do not wish any more articles of the kind alluded to.

HANNY, (Pine Hill, O.,) writes: "Will the Post answer a few questions, and much oblige an old subscriber? I am a lawyer, just getting into practice, and am thirty years old. About fifteen months ago I fell in love with a lady, and have since asked her to be my wife. She is of a good, respectable family; is intelligent and industrious; but her parents are poor, and she has been obliged to earn her own livelihood by clerking. Now the trouble is, my father is very much opposed to my marriage, for the reason that she is not wealthy. I am the only child he has, and he is very wealthy, and I have no capital at all. But if I marry her he will disinherit me, and cut me off without a penny. I will be honest and tell you that I love the girl as I think I shall never love another. But I don't like the idea of losing all my father's wealth, which I certainly will if I marry her. Now what must I do? Would you marry the girl and let all the wealth go? or disappoint the girl and inherit the wealth? My father will never relent if I marry her. The lady knows nothing of the matter at all, and thinks everything of me. To disappoint her would cause us both untold misery. But on the other hand if I marry her, and lose my father's fortune, I am afraid I will afterwards regret it. Can you give me a word of advice to help me out of this dilemma?" Of course we take your word for what does not seem very reasonable, that your father's only objection is the lady's lack of wealth. This is not a sufficient cause for so determined an opposition, and you being thirty years of age seem quite old enough to decide for yourself, even in so important a matter as this. It is, of course, an unpleasant matter to lose the chance of prospective wealth and your father's approbation, and we can appreciate your indecision. But wealth is of no value except as a means of happiness; and if, on the contrary, it stands between you and happiness, we think you should not be long in deciding. Besides, it is not yourself alone that is to be considered. You have won the affections of a worthy lady, and gone so far as to ask her hand in marriage. Let the matter rest till you are able to make your own living. Then, if circumstances continue to stand as they do now, marry the girl and let the money go.

A. E. B., (Holden, Iowa,) writes: "Please answer a few questions for me. 1st. I have a linen-stamper, and the types or letters are all filled up. How can I clean them out? 2d. Can you give me a receipt for making indelible ink? 3d. How much of an education does it require to become a telegraph operator? In what branches of education should one be perfect for that business? 4th. I would like to learn book-keeping. What should be my first step for a beginning? 5th. If I take a young lady to church, which should go in first? 6th. And if I take her home should I open the door for her at her own house? 7th. How is my orthography?" 1st. We do not know the material of your instrument. You had better use some sharp tool to clean out the letters. If they are gummed up it might be well to subject it to heat, and clean it with the tool afterward. Of course we cannot give reliable directions without knowing what your instrument is made of. 2d. For the ink take nitrate of silver ½ oz., hot distilled water ½ oz. Cool the mixture a little, and add ½ oz. mucilage, with sap green or syrup of buckthorn to color. For the preparation with which to first moisten the substance to be marked, take carbonate of soda 1 to 1½ oz., water 1 pint—color as before. 3d. You simply need to be a quick reader and writer, and to have a good ear for time. 4th. Apply to a teacher, or procure the necessary books and instruct yourself. 5th. The lady. 6th. It is not necessary, unless it should be inconvenient for the lady to open it. 7th. It needs improvement.

J. C., (Circleville, Ohio,) says: "I thought I would just ask you one question. Why is it that after taking your valuable paper for forty-five years that I cannot do without it for one year?" The answer is very easy, but our modesty does not allow us to give it.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RECEIPTS.

SAUSAGES.—The proper seasoning is salt, pepper, sage, summer savory, or thyme; they should be one-third fat, the remainder lean, finely chopped, and the seasonings well mixed, and proportioned so that one herb may not predominate over the others. If skins are used, they cannot be prepared with too much care, but they are about as well made into cakes; spread the cakes on a clean whitewood board, and keep them in a dry cool place; fry them long and gently; serve with potatoes, cider-apple sauce, plain stewed apples without sugar, baked sour apples or sour pickles.

HEAD-CHEESE.—Boil the head of a hog, after seeing it well cleansed and the eyes removed, tender. When it is boiled to rags, drain it in a colander, chop it as fine as possible, season to taste with pepper, salt, sage, and thyme; press all the water from it, put it in a form, and press it until cold; to use, cut it in thin slices like cheese; if properly prepared, will keep all winter.

COOKING RAISINS.—It is well to cook raisins before putting them into pies, cakes, or puddings. Soaking them is not sufficient. Steaming them by pouring a small quantity of boiling water amongst them in a tightly closing dish, and allowing them plenty of time to cook before opening, is a good plan. When raisins are rightly cooked before using, they are plumper and more palatable, and can be eaten without injury by most dyspeptics.

PUMPKIN PIES.—Pare the pumpkin, then grate it, and add sugar and ginger to taste, and milk enough to make it of the proper consistency; then line your pie-tins with crust, put in your pumpkin and bake in the ordinary way. After trying this once, no one will, I think, wish to go back to the old way of making pies of stewed pumpkin.

A NICE ONION SAUCE.—Peel and thinly slice four or five onions, put them into a saucepan with a piece of butter; stir the onion until browned; then stir in slowly a spoonful of flour, four tablespoonfuls of any kind of nice broth, a little pepper and salt; boil this for a few minutes; watch, to prevent its scorching; then add a wineglassful of mushroom catsup. Strain it through a hair-sieve. Serve hot. This is a very nice gravy for steaks.

GRAHAM BREAD.—Take two cups of butter-milk; one-half cup best sugar-house syrup; half teaspoonful salt. Stir with a spoon to a stiff mass (not too stiff, else the bread will be too hard); pour into a three-pint basin, well buttered; put it in a steamer over cold water, which gives the loaf more time for rising. Steam three-quarters of an hour; then place it in the oven just long enough to give it a rich brown color. If the buttermilk is not of sufficient richness, use a tablespoonful of thick cream. Graham bread raised with yeast is much improved by cooking in the same way.

TO CURE SORE THROAT.—Take the whites of two eggs and beat them with two spoonfuls of white sugar; grate in a little nutmeg, and then add a pint of lukewarm water. Stir well, and drink often. Repeat the prescription if necessary, and it will cure the most obstinate case of hoarseness in a short time.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

BURIED RIVERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. No one should be disliked for honesty.
2. Will Mr. Stobel be here to-day?
3. The courier has arrived with a message.
4. They are going to New Haven soon.
5. The robbers were attacked and but few of the gang escaped.
6. We cannot dismiss our industrious servant.
7. There is snow on the top of the mountain.
8. The cars will either stop at or near the city.
9. Two negatives in the same sentence are equivalent to an affirmative.
10. The engineer proceeded unaware of the danger ahead.
11. The great fire destroyed many fine buildings.
12. Do not fail to be here to-morrow.
13. We started home as the steamboat arrived.
14. Laura is in the house.
15. After viewing the town I left for the country.
16. In less than an hour the victory was gained.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

RIDDLE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My first is in chestnut, but not in wood.
My 2d's in righteous, but not in good.
My 3d is in crystal, but not in glass.
My 4th is in vanish, but not in pass.
My 5th is in chosen, but not in preferred.
My 6th is in spirit, but not in word.
My 7th is in blossom, but not in flower.
My 8th is in rain drop, but not in shower.
And my 9th is in the Saviour's natal hour.
My whole is a spell word without alloy,
And its echoes are thankfulness, peace and joy.

Baltimore, Md. EMILY.

REBUS.

A personage in heathen fable famed,
A rural poem by great Virgil named;
An instrument which shoemakers employ;
One-half of what all creatures here enjoy;
An ancient enemy of Israel's race;
A canton which to Switzerland you trace;
A lovely female in verse paramount;
A story which our seamen oft recount.

Reader, observe the initials; they disclose
The demon of innumerable woes;
Oh, let him not approach your hearth, for he
Is the sure harbinger of misery.
The final letters of each word display
The finger-post which marks the only way
To heavenly regions of perpetual day.

ALGEBRAICAL PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A speculator bought a cow, an ox and a horse, paying $100 for all of them. He sold the cow for $30, and gained as much *per cent.* on her as the horse cost him; the ox he sold for $36, and gained as much *per cent.* on him as the cow cost him. Required—the price he paid for each.

ARTEMAS MARTIN.

Erie, Erie Co., Pa.

NEIGHBORLY QUESTION.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Two neighbors were talking together of their respective ages. John said to William: "You know I am much the older. If the square of my age is added to the square of your age the sum of these squares will amount to 5,610; while the square of the difference between our ages is 676. By this tell me my own and your age." How old was each?

PETER PLAIN.

CONUNDRUMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Why is a defeated man like wool? Because he is worsted.

What is the difference between accepted and rejected lovers? The accepted kisses the misses, and the rejected misses the kisses.

When does a lady drink music? When she has a pianoforte (piano for tea).

Why are conundrums like monkeys? Because they are troublesome.

When is wheat like a blunt knife? When it is sent to be ground.

What is the difference between a "stern parient" and a doctor? One whacks and loves his child, and the other whacks an' 'ates (vaccinates) him. (Awful).

ANSWERS TO LAST.

ANAGRAMS—1. Huntsville. 2. Belmont. 3. Little Rock. 4. Traverse. 5. Los Angeles. 6. Salt Lake. 7. Litchfield. 8. Roseburg. 9. Montgomery. 10. Prescott. 11. Marysville. 12. Marquett.

METAGRAM.—Zone, tone, lone, hone, gone, cone.

WORD SQUARES.—

I.	II.
SUEZ	NEW
UNDO	EWE
EDEN	WED
ZONE	

PROBLEM.—156, 240 and 252 perches.